

PLUCK AND LUCK

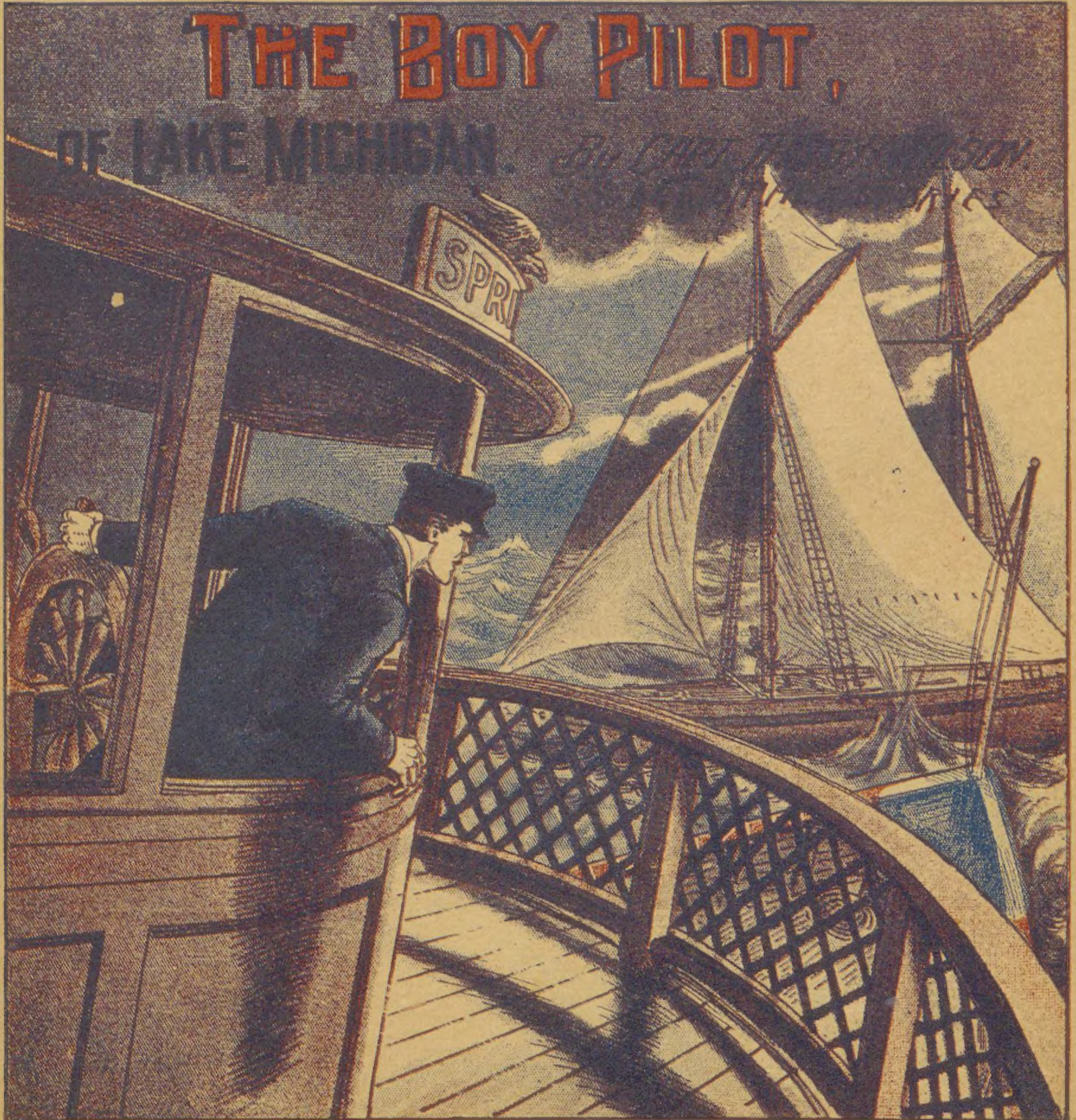
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Leon saw a rakish schooner flit by. He gasped and held his breath. There came a shock and a long-continued grind as the bow of the Sprite scraped more than half the length of the schooner, which then darted out of sight.

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THE BOY PILOT

OF LAKE MICHIGAN

BY CAPT. THOS. H. WILSON

CHAPTER I.—Leon Leroy.

"Drunken Dick! Come on, boys!"

"Drunken Dick!"

"Drunken Dick!"

A dissolute and degraded wretch was this Drunken Dick, and known to everybody in Milwaukee as a poor fellow, honest as the day was long; his own worst enemy from inability to resist the temptations of the cup. To most boys a drunken man is considered excellent prey, and more than once Dick had been tormented by the thoughtless young lads of Milwaukee, who could see in him only an object of sport instead of pity. It was just before Christmas, and the first snow of the season lay on the ground.

"Drunken Dick!"

"Drunken Dick!"

So the boys, composing a small crowd, on the way for a skate, shouted, on seeing the ill-clad and miserable man staggering along, so deeply under the influence of liquor as hardly to be able to retain his perpendicular. In a minute more every lad of them was busily engaged in packing and flinging snowballs at Drunken Dick. One of the well-directed missiles took off his hat, at which there was a wild hurrah, and howl of delight. Dick then turned and faced his tormentors, at whom he looked reproachfully, but not angrily. Another snowball now struck him in the forehead, but fortunately was loosely packed, and did him no damage.

"Boys," said Dick, in a thick tone, when he had wiped the snow off his face, "boys, you had ought to be ashamed of yourself for badgering a man who's never done any of you any harm."

They jibed and jeered at him when he had finished speaking, but no angry light appeared in his face or eyes. Dick was an educated man, and was gifted with delicate and sensitive feelings; and at such moments was made more than ever conscious of how deeply he had sunk that such things were possible. Paying no heed to his maudlin expostulations, they continued to snowball him, until finally one of their number flung a snowball, in the center of which was concealed a flat, sharp-edged piece of ice. It was flung, and took Dick squarely in the forehead, which the ice gashed.

"Shame—shame!"

So cried a ringing voice at this juncture, and a stout young lad now hastily placed himself beside the drunken man.

"Why don't you try this when Dick is sober? Shame on you! Hold on, there!"—fixing his gaze on a lad in the very act of firing another snowball—"I am here to protect him, and I'm going to do it, too."

"Do you know him?" asked one lad of another.

"Yes, it's George Starr."

"One of the professor's crowd?"

"Yes."

"Then let's give him a dose, too."

"No—no," interrupted one, more fair-minded. "Give him a show—act square with him. Wait until he's got his crowd. Six against one ain't fair by a jugful."

But some of them had never known what it was to do a fair-minded thing, and one up and flung his ready snowball. It took George Starr in the breast. The latter uttered no word. But his eyes began to sparkle. The fact of his remaining silent encouraged the lads to proceed, and they did so.

"I warn you to stop!"

Laughing Starr's warning to scorn, they still proceeded to fusillade with the snowballs, until finally Starr sprang forward hastily, and by a well-directed blow sent one of their number headlong in the snow. This was the signal for opening a fray, and four of the six pitched on Starr. The other two remained idle spectators, not wishing to act so cowardly and unfairly. Starr was a brave and gallant lad, and never quailed at finding himself opposed to four youths, all as old and large as himself. He stood up manfully, and did his best, although it would have been insanity on his part to have supposed himself a match for all four. But he knew that there was honor in defeat sometimes, and this would be one of those occasions. They crowded him hard; in another minute must have downed him completely, when the complexion of affairs was changed by the sudden appearance on the scene of a youth who was a stranger to them all. Tall for his age, which was fourteen, he was well built, had dark blue eyes and a handsome face, that was lined with the marks of determination. His hair was brown, and curled tightly to his head, so tightly that no parting was visible. It took him only a second to see how matters stood, and that Starr was alone opposed to the four.

"Whoop!" he cried, and placed himself at Starr's side, and then—spat—spat!

"Come on, you cowardly beggars—come on!" he exclaimed. "Four against one. eh? That

shows what you are! Come on! Bravo!" as Starr sent one of his assailants to earth. Bravo! spat! There's another!"

In less than two minutes the fight was ended. The crowd of six were retreating, the punished four growling and quarreling with the two who had stood by without interfering.

"Gentlemen," and Drunken Dick approached them, "gentlemen, you both have my heartfelt thanks. I'm only a poor, broken-down devil, who knows nothing except how to fiddle and guzzle rum, and it ain't likely I'll ever be able to repay your kindness, but if it can be done I'll do it!"

Starr bestowed on the man a look of pity, which it was harder for Dick to calmly bear than the taunts and snowballs of the Academy crowd.

"Say no more, Dick," said Starr. "Here is ten cents for you, and try to spend it for something besides rum."

Refusing the proffered coin, Dick reeled away, uttering his thanks as he went.

"And now," said Starr, turning to his companion, after both had watched Dick disappear from sight; "and now let me thank you. But for your timely assistance they would have got away with me in fine style."

"Say no more about it. Which way do you go?"

"Up the street. Will you walk along with me?"

"Yes. And as we go I should like to ask a few questions."

"Which I shall certainly answer to the best of my ability," courteously returned Starr. "You are a stranger here, I think."

"I am. I have come to attend the school of Professor Teachem."

"Why, I go there myself. We shall then be schoolmates."

"Which I shall not be sorry for. Gracious, weren't you laying out those chaps! Well, I'm in want of a nice boarding place, and the questions I wished to ask were in regard to one."

"Are you left to select it yourself?" asked Starr, in some surprise.

"Yes," was the reply, and the voice took on a sad tone. "I am all alone in the world, and, young as I am, have to act for myself."

For a minute Starr was silent, and then he blurted out:

"How would you like to live with my folks?"

"Could I? Would they let me?" in an eager tone. "I should like nothing better."

"We can see whether they will or not," returned Starr. "Father is far above the necessity of keeping a boarding-house, but I am an only child, and if I seem to wish it very bad, I shouldn't wonder if they let me have my way."

"Then you like me?" and the stranger gazed earnestly into the frank and open face of George Starr.

"Immensely!" returned the latter.

"And I like you," said the stranger. "We will be chums henceforth. What say you——"

"George Starr," filling the blank. "I say yes——"

"Leon Leroy."

The two lads shook hands, and then together went to the home of George Starr. That evening after supper, shared by Leon, when they were all gathered in the sitting-room, George broached the subject which was uppermost in his mind. It had been spoken of before to his mother, who had intimated the same to Mr. Starr, who

was consequently not taken by surprise. Mr. Starr was loath to take anybody into his house, but, as George had said, he was an only child, and there were but few occasions on which his wishes were not acceded to. And this was not one of them.

"Before taking your answer, Mr. Starr, I must first tell you my history," said Leon. "It is only right you should know it. Of my parents I know nothing whatever. The first that I distinctly remember was being an inmate of a school for small children. Here I remained until recently, when I received a letter from a Chicago lawyer, ordering me to Professor's Teachem's, in this place. Through this lawyer sums of money are regularly received for my maintenance and education, and I am satisfied that he knows who my parents are, although he keeps it a profound secret. I am, and have always been, left strictly to myself, and a lonesome life mine has been, with no playmate nor companion in whom I could confide. And now, sir, you know the bare outlines of my history."

Good, kind-headed Mrs. Starr was touched by the relation of this story, and gladly welcomed the lone and unknown youth into her household. And she never had reason to regret doing so.

CHAPTER II.—On the Lake.

Months passed away, and in their flight cemented the friendship between George Starr and Leon Leroy, whom Mr. and Mrs. Starr had come almost to love as their own son. Together they attended the school of Professor Teachem, and in the occasional pitched fights between the professor's crowd and the "Academy" lads they proved such a valiant team that it was not long before the Academyites declared a truce. Mr. Starr's business was that of storage of merchandise, and particularly grain, which business—now of such immense proportions—was then in its infancy. In connection with his storage warehouses, Mr. Starr owned and ran a steamboat between Milwaukee and Manitowoc, touching alongshore between these two points, and making three round trips in a week. Both of the lads were fond of the water, and during the summer they almost lived on board of the Lark, Starr in the engine-room with the engineer, and Leon in the pilot-house, when they were under way. A proud moment it was for George when the engineer put the starting-bar in his hand and trusted him to work the engine to warm her up just before starting on a return trip from Manitowoc. And it was not long before George could be trusted to work the Lark into landings and out again.

"I never in all my life see anybody pick it up as quick as you have," the engineer one day said. "Why, in case of necessity, you could now be trusted to run the Lark a round trip."

The old and grizzled pilot was equally as complimentary concerning Leon. The pilot had spent many years on the lake, and knew its coast like a book. Not a rock nor tree of any prominence was to be found alongshore with which he was not familiar. He had taken a fancy to Leon, and imparted to him much information derived

from his own observations, and which, up to this time, he had kept locked in his own breast. At last he hesitated not an instant in permitting Leon to guide the vessel, while he laid back in the pilot-house and puffed away at a highly-colored meershaum pipe.

"For a boy you're the smarest pilot I ever saw," the old fellow remarked, as he stood by and watched Leon make his first landing.

"I've had a good teacher, which accounts for it," and Leon laughed lightly.

"Well, now," and the pilot's face was lighted up by a gratified glow at this compliment, "well, now, the teacher may have had a little to do with it, but the teachin' wouldn't amount to nothin' if there wasn't the ability to comprehend it. It would be like trying to fill up a bottomless well."

That was a happily passed vacation. And the manner in which it was spent was destined to have much influence on their future lives. Mr. Starr had refused to receive more than a nominal sum for the board of Leon, so that the latter was able to save considerable out of his very ample allowance, which arrived at stated intervals, together with a short note, hoping that Master Leon was well, and extending the compliments of the season. Never was there a holiday, when it was possible, that the two friends did not pass it on the lake.

The following year, just before the summer vacation, Mr. Starr made his son a present of two hundred dollars. This was added to the sum of which Leon was master, and on the last day of school they were two as happy lads as the world ever saw. Accompanied by Mr. Starr, they went next day to Chicago, where they had an agent for some time on the lookout for a small steam vessel. This he had found only a few days before, and had bought on approbation—that is, agreeing to buy the vessel if the parties he represented were suited with her. On seeing her the lads at once fell in love with her. She was a dainty little craft, and was named Water-Sprite. They went on board of her, and George went into ecstasies over the brightly polished engine, while Leon found food for admiration in the pretty wheel-house, with its big wheel, made of dark and light-colored woods combined.

The boat had been used as a pleasurecraft by a wealthy gentleman, who had now no further use for her, and everything was in apple-pie order aboard the Sprite, as they soon learned to call her. Steam was raised and a trial trip made. The Sprite had been built with an eye to speed, and as her prospective owners sailed her a few miles up the lake, they went nearly wild with delight.

"How is it, Leon?" George called up from the engine-room. "Is she making time?"

"Is she? You're just shouting she is! Got on all the steam she will carry?"

"No, not by twenty-five pounds."

"Bully! George, the Sprite is a treasure—is a darling!"

And so she was. They worked her up a little more—and a little more, until they were all satisfied that she was covering more miles than even the Lark could, which was saying a good deal, as the Lark was at that time one of the smartest crafts on the lake. Now, if the price was only not too great! Haunted by this fear,

they turned the Sprite's head toward Chicago—not the Chicago of to-day, but a far different place—a place of uneven, breakneck sidewalks, houses raised above the street on piles, with vacant spaces beneath them. The owners really wanted more money than the lads wished to pay, or, in fact, would pay. When the agent knew their limit he sent word to the owner, who concluded to take the proffered sum rather than keep the Water-Sprite longer on his hands. It took only a short time to constitute Leon and George the legal owners of the vessel, and two days later they headed the Sprite for Milwaukee. The run was made in remarkably quick time, elating her owners amazingly. At first it was the intention of Leon and George to keep the Sprite exclusively for their own use, but this they found to be rather more expensive than they had supposed would be the case, and with Mr. Starr's consent the following advertisement appeared in one of the Milwaukee papers:

"Take Notice:—For select picnic or tourist parties, the Water-Sprite can be chartered by the day or week, during the months of August and September. Apply to Captain Leon Leroy, on board."

The first party they were called on to take out was composed of a number of gentlemen from New York, who had been West on business, and had some object in view in wishing to go up the lake; perhaps only to see it, for all that ever was known. It was however, presumed to be only a pleasure party. It was a glorious morning that had been selected for the start.

"On deck, there!" called Leon, when all the party was on board.

"Aye, aye, sir!" came the Dutch accented reply of Dederick Donner, who had been engaged as the Sprite's deck-hand.

"Haul in the plank!"

This Dederick proceeded to do.

"Thow off! Haul in the lines!"

Leon's hand was on the bell-pull. Clang-Clang! George caused the wheels to turn over backward, throwing the Sprite's prow further away from the dock. Clang! Steam was cut off; the wheels ceased to move. Clang! Slowly steam was let into the cylinders; the wheels began to revolve in the proper direction, and the Sprite began to forge ahead. Ting-a-ling—a-ling—a-ling! It was the jingle bell, and meant "hook on." The long arms, or eccentrics, fell into their places with a clash, following which George opened the valve a little wider. Now followed the regular, monotonous, uninterrupted spat of the buckets of the wheels as they churned the water, and the Sprite was fairly under way. At Kewaunee, some miles up the lake, they stopped to take on board another member of the party, and then headed for Sturgeon Bay. Here a week was pleasantly and profitably spent in fishing and hunting. Then the leader of the party approached Leon to inquire how far he could safely pilot them up the lake.

"I can take you to the Straits of Mackinack," was the reply.

"Safely?"

"Yes, sir."

"I think, then, we'll go up as high as that."

stopping along the way at the different points of interest."

"Very well."

Nothing of interest occurred until one afternoon, when, while in the middle of the lake, Leon's keen eyes, taught by the old pilot of the Lark, discovered signs in the distance of a coming squall. Immediately he began issuing his orders to get everything snug and in the best possible shape to meet the swiftly approaching squall. As he continued to watch the coming squall, his face became grave, and then the color began to desert it.

"Is there any danger?"

So asked the leader of the pleasure party, keenly eyeing Leon, as he entered the pilot-house.

"I'll not conceal the truth from you. There is danger ahead of us—great and terrible danger—but with His help we'll pull through."

The gentleman gazed intently at Leon for fully a minute, and then he breathed a sigh of relief. His life, and the lives of his friends depended on this young lad. But that inspection, during which Leon stood there, his hands firmly clutching the spokes of the wheel, his figure erect, his nostrils distended, like those of a war-horse at the beat of the drum and the clash of distant musketry, informed him that their lives could be in no better keeping under the circumstances, unless lack of experience might be the cause, for certainly Leon did not lack nerve and pluck. The sinking sun was long since hidden behind a dense black mass of clouds, which were mounting swiftly higher and higher in the heavens. For away they could see an immense foam-crested roller bounding along, marking the progress of the squall. Nearer and nearer, and then they heard the shrieking of the wind and the din and roar of the waves. With a last whoop and a shriek, the squall was down on them, like a hawk pouncing on its prey. Beneath the shock of the terrible stroke of that first gigantic roller, the little Sprite trembled from stem to stern, as if in a death-throe.

The upreared crest of the roller broke over her, and for a few seconds her fore deck was hidden from sight. It was a terrible moment, for it was then a question whether the Sprite would be able to rise beneath the weight of the water, or would be crowded forever beneath the lake by the succeeding waves. Not one on board the little steamer but held his breath in suspense, his cheeks blanched and lips trembling. Gallant little vessel! Nobly did she behave! She seemed gifted almost with reason as she struggled against being overpowered by the angry rollers. She shed her load of water, and arose like a duck to the surface. All breathed more easily. But the face of Leon remained grave. In the track of the squall a storm was following—a storm which they might not outlive.

CHAPTER III.—Hard Aport.

Old tars frequently sneer at fresh-water sailors, and listen in derisive manner to the tales of terrible storms on the great fresh-water seas of America. And yet the storms on the lakes are frequently as severe as those of the broad

oceans that divide the continents, with the difference that on the lakes the waves are shorter—more "choppy"—and everyone strikes with sledgehammer force. The author once heard of an old Jack-tar who had sneered at the lakes a great deal, who, chancing to be caught out in a vessel on a pretty rough day, was taken violently seasick, something that had never happened to him at sea. Thereafter he was never heard to utter a sneering expression. Of the nature of these lake storms Leon was well aware, and as we have said, his face remained very grave. So well had the Sprite acted at the moment of being struck by the squall, that he was more than ever in love with her. Still, unless she was a more seaworthy craft than he had reason to believe her to be, she could never outlive the coming storm, and no port could be made. He did not consider it right to keep his passengers in ignorance of the true state of affairs, and told them frankly that while he would do his best, he feared for the worst.

"But she survived the squall!" cried one. "Surely, then, she should ride out the storm."

"She would have gone under had I not eased her at precisely the right moment," returned Leon. "Were it daylight, and I could see every approaching mountain of water, I might be able to carry her through for a couple of hours. But night is already closing in, and——"

Leon paused, glanced from one to another, and then solemnly said:

"Our lives are in the hands of Providence alone, and there we must place our trust."

They saw that his words, his gloomy view of the situation, were not the result of cowardice, but were rather what a brave mind saw in looking fearlessly at stern facts. Leon was not mistaken in his supposition that a storm was following in the wake of the squall. After the latter had passed, there came a lull of, perhaps, fifteen minutes, and then the storm closed in on them, even as the dense darkness of a cloudy night settled over the face of the lake. The rain began to drive against the pilot-house windows. The wind began to whistle through the stay-chains of the smoke-stack. The chopping waves struck under the bows—thump—thump—sometimes so heavily as to stop all headway. The Sprite began to pitch and toss frightfully, and ere long every person on board (save Leon, George and Dederick, who were used to the lake) was seasick. What made matters worse was the frequent and sudden shifting of the wind, which would send an unexpected roller under the Sprite's guard, and; lifting one side high out of water, would leave the wheel to spin around in air. This strained the engine fearfully, and it would groan and squeak, until George would stand with distending eyes, every moment expecting to see something give way, and only breathing free again, when Leon brought the vessel's head around to the wind's new quarter. Wilder and wilder the tempest grew, and higher the waves ran. One moment the Sprite was perched on top of an immense roller, and the next instant was plunging headlong down into the trough of the sea, until it seemed as if naught but a miracle could save her from diving bodily out of sight. The eccentric movement of the vessel made it exceedingly hard for George

to fire up, he being fireman as well as engineer, and oftentimes the stick of cord wood which he tried to fling into the furnace was pitched back on the floor by a sudden jerk. This gave rise to a sudden and terrible danger, in the early part of the storm. When the furnace doors were open, the Sprite suddenly tried to stand on her head, and a lot of blazing wood and a bushel or more of red-hot coals rushed out of the furnace, spread beyond the iron guard-plate on the floor, and reached the yellow pine flooring beyond. In an instant there was a blaze. Rapidly it began to spread, while George, appalled by the suddenness of this great peril, was rooted to the spot with horror. But only for one moment. His first impulse was to call up through the tube and inform Leon. But then he reflected that Leon had all he wanted to attend to, and instead, called to Dederick for his assistance.

"Himmel!" gasped the Dutch lad, on seeing the fire. "Das was nix goot vater! By gracious, I dinks dot if ve open the front doors ve got plenty."

"Quick, Dederick! We have no time to lose," dashing shut the furnace doors. Dederick was a quick-witted youth, as well as a clear-headed one. Going to the doors which divided the enclosed portion from the open foredeck, he opened one of them about six inches. The next wave that broke over the deck rushed against the doors, and began pouring through the opening. Closing the door as soon as possible, he snatched a broom and began to sweep the backward rushing tide into the fire-room, flush with the main-deck, and not, as it usually the case, in the hold. In no other way could they have obtained water enough to quench the fire; but in this way they got plenty, and also some to spare, which at each pitch of the vessel rushed up and down the deck.

"Thank Heaven!" gasped George, when all danger of fire was passed. "That was a narrow escape. Dederick, bring the fire-pails here and fill them with water in case we have another accident of the same kind."

At once Dederick brought the buckets, and with a scoop caught the water rushing along the deck and put in as much as would remain without slopping over. Dederick had just finished doing this when Leon called down through the tube for him to come up and give his assistance at the wheel. The Sprite usually worked very easily, but the reverse was the case at the present time, else Leon would not have called Dederick. What a night! It was impossible to see six inches in front of one's nose, and Leon was now steering by compass alone. Just before it became too dark to see, Leon had taken out and located his position on a chart. When Dederick had entered the pilot-house and taken hold of the wheel, Leon consulted the compass, and his face grew very white as he stared at it with an intentness and earnestness that denoted the needle's informing him of something out of common.

"Keep her steady!" said Leon, in a husky voice. "Speak the instant you find the wind chopping. I must look at the chart again."

Spreading out the chart, he struck a match, whose flame lasted sufficiently long for his purpose. He saw all—ay, more than he wanted to see. He saw that they were slowly but surely

drawing near a group of rocky islands, situated near the center of the lake, known thereabouts as Fox Isles. Did the wind hold in its present quarter they must inevitably be wrecked, for an attempt to wear about, or do aught but keep the Sprite's bows to the tempest, meant certain death.

"Heaven be merciful to us!" murmured Leon, as he folded up the chart and took his post beside Dederick at the wheel.

For the first time he now learned of the peril from fire which they had just escaped, and the thrill of horror the tale produced was still tingling his nerves, when, high above the roar of the tempest, came a wild shriek—a shriek uttered by a human voice. Catching their breath, they listened. Again it came. Bang! Down came the window of the pilot-house, and Leon faced the wild storm. Again it came, borne on the shrieking blast. This time he understood it.

"Boat ahoy!"

"Ay—ay!" making a trumpet of his hands.

"Ease off, or you'll sink us!"

Leon groaned. It was an impossibility. Heaven help them all. Thirty or forty seconds of dreadful waiting, of awful suspense, and then across their bows—seen by aid of the steamboat's lights—Leon saw a rakish schooner flit by. He gasped and held his breath. There came a shock, and a long-continued grind as the bows of the Sprite scraped more than half the length of the schooner, which then darted out of sight, plunging into the gloom so suddenly that it almost appeared as if she had dissolved into nothing.

"Good Heavens! What's that?" came up through the tube.

"We have narrowly escaped a collision. See if she is making water—that grind may have sprung her stern."

"She is making water, I think," came back the distant reply a moment later.

"Go down, Dederick."

"But, captain, can you handle the wheel alone?"

"Go down. I must do it. Go at once."

Hardly had Dederick left the pilot-house when Leon suddenly bent forward, and gazed earnestly ahead to a distant spot in the gloom, where the universal blackness was modified by a red glow like that which a beacon fire might produce. Just as he was convinced that his eyes had not deceived him, his ears were saluted by that most dreadful of sounds, to one who comprehends what it implied—of high running waves dashing against unyielding rock and forming breakers. Nearer—nearer, the glow of a fire becoming more and more marked, and the sounds of the breakers ringing louder and louder in his ears. It was indeed an appalling situation. Leon located the dreadful spot, flung open the cover of the compass box, glanced at the needles, swept his eyes around the dense circles of gloom ahead, and then—

With a mad and despairing energy, he gripped the spokes of the wheel and jammed it down hard-aport—hard-aport for his own life—hard-aport for the lives entrusted to his care—hard-aport to cheat the black and blood-hungry rocks ahead—hard-aport, and the gale caught her quarter and careened her over—over, until one guard was entirely beneath water. Leon eased

her up, but she would not rise. Instead, while one guard continued to rise, the other plunged deeper and deeper into the boiling water. Further and further she keeled over, until at last a hollow cry, denoting the loss of all hope, fell from Leon's bloodless lips. When he gave up, the case was indeed desperate. He thought they, too, must now find the same watery grave which he felt sure had long since engulfed the schooner.

CHAPTER IV.—The "Sprite" Behaves Well.

There were a few dreadful seconds of suspense during which it was impossible to fortell what would be the result of bringing around the Sprite so as to prevent her destruction on the rock-ribbed reef near the island. Up to this time her gallant pilot had kept her on the surface of the lake by the exercise of a strong hand, backed by steady nerves, so as to bring the Sprite's head around at each new change in the gale. By now changing her course to save her from the rocks, the gale caught her on the side, and careened her far over, until one guard was buried far under water. Over—over she kept going—and Leon caught his breath, and waited the result with a sinking heart. He eased her up a trifle, as much as he dared, but it was too little to accomplish any good. To ease her sufficiently to escape the present danger was to run into another equally as great. Over—over—until Leon groaned:

"She is capsizing—nothing can save her? She will turn upside down, and go straight to the bottom of the lake."

Oh, the agonies of such a moment of doubt and uncertainty. It was a most desperate strait. Only the hand of a merciful Providence could save them. And that hand, or fate, or luck—call it what you will—befriended them in this moment of dire necessity. There came a sudden lull or cessation of the wild blast, such as are observable in nearly every gale, and which science cannot account for. It lasted just one minute. Brief as the time was, it allowed the Sprite a chance of righting herself, and the seaworthy little craft at once availed herself of it. Slowly the depressed guard began to rise, and she was as nearly on an even keel, when, with a wild shriek, the gale pounced down again. With pale but resolute face, Leon stood clutching the spokes of the wheel. The blast struck the Sprite. A space of time not exceeding a couple of seconds, and then a low but fervent exclamation fell from Leon's lips:

"Thank Heaven!"

The gale's direction had changed a couple of points, and he was able to bring the Sprite's bows even further around, thus leaving the rocks further under his lee. Slowly the vessel forged ahead, now climbing slowly up some hill of water, now plunging with incredible swiftness into the valley, while her engines creaked and strained. Everything held, however; the Sprite was well and strongly built. And now, getting beyond the point of rock which had hidden from view the fire whose reflection had been seen, Leon saw the fire itself. It was a bonfire, made of fagots, and was burning in a bowl-shaped cavity

of the rocky elevation near the shore. Just beneath the fire, partially in its glare, and partially in the edges of the deep shadows, Leon saw three men and a woman. All seemed anxious, for all were peering out over the yeasty surface of the lake, as if expecting yet dreading to see something.

"Can they be watching for the schooner?" reflected Leon. "If they have friends aboard of her, I pity them; she must be foundered before now."

Now placing his mouth to the speaking tube, he asked if Dederick had yet made an examination of the hold.

"Yes," came back the reply, followed by the cheering words: "And we're all right. Our bows are not sprung a particle."

This was verified by Dederick himself when he appeared in the pilot-house a few minutes later. Striking the schooner had not done the Sprite any harm. As to the schooner, that could only be known by those on board of her, and they would never live to tell the tale—at least, so Leon thought. All that livelong night Leon and Dederick remained at the wheel. It took them fully two hours before they felt assured that the Sprite no longer was in danger of running on these rocky islands. From that time until daylight was a succession of fleeting alarms and prompt actions. A dozen times or more the touch of the wheel at the right moment saved the vessel, and every few minutes they were obliged to change the Sprite's course, as the gale continued to chop around, until it at last came from nearly a directly opposite quarter to that from which it had at first come howling over the lake. With the dawning of day the gale began to abate, and before noon the surface of the lake was quite calm, and the sun shone out brightly. By this time the passengers of the Sprite had recovered from their seasickness and the alarms occasioned by the perils through which they had passed. They now paid a visit in a body to Leon, and expressed their thanks and gratitude for saving their lives by sticking so closely to his post.

"It was my duty," replied Leon. "Say no more then, gentlemen, but rather inform me what you now wish to do."

This question they had already been discussing among themselves, and one quickly rejoined:

"If we are liable to be caught in any more storms like those of last night, I move that we get ashore at once."

"Are we liable to meet with another storm?" asked another.

"You certainly are," was the reply. "Storms are uncommon at this season of the year; but having had one is proof that another is possible. And a storm on Lake Michigan is no joke."

"I grant you that. And do you think we'll meet another storm in a week or ten days?"

"I do not."

"Then I move that we complete our contemplated trip," to his companions.

One and all had the most profound confidence in this boy who had held the lives of them all in the hollow of his hand. This was decided on by the passengers, and they had just left the pilot-house, when Leon sighted land ahead. Of this he was not sorry, as, when he made it, he

could get his bearings, instead of running at random as he was now doing.

"Do you turn in, Dederick, and get some sleep," said Leon, "so as to be prepared to take my place in a couple of hours."

Dederick promptly obeyed. Entering a little stateroom connecting with the pilot-house, his snore soon after floated to Leon's ears. Meanwhile, they slowly drew near the land sighed by Leon, who now saw that it was not a projecting point of the mainland, but an island. When still nearer he became convinced that they were approaching the island on which they had so nearly been destroyed the night before. Nor was he mistaken. Yes; there was the same line of breakers ahead, marked by a slender line of foam, but no longer booming sullenly as when he had first become aware of their nearness the night before. Rounding the point of rock just as the sun was sinking, he saw before him the beach on which he had seen the woman and the men, and located the spot where the fire was blazed up. Just here was a nice little haven, and Leon formed the intention of remaining all night, which would thus give him a chance to obtain the rest he so sadly needed. George was a little better off, having been able to catch a few cat-naps in the engine-room. Blowing a prolonged blast of the steam-whistle, Leon headed the Sprite into the natural haven. To his surprise no one came to the beach in response to the signal, and yet if anybody were on the island the scream of the whistle must have been heard.

As they drew near the shore, Leon saw a rude sort of dock, evidently the work of human hands, and beside this he eventually placed the Sprite, with the skill of a practiced pilot. Still, nobody had put in an appearance, and Dederick was obliged to jump ashore and himself fasten the lines. This rather puzzled Leon, and he thought it possible he might be mistaken until after he had paid a visit to the spot where he judged the beacon fire must have been. When he found the heap of ashes and charred fragments of woods remaining from this fire, he knew that he could not be mistaken—that he was on one of the Fox Isles. It was growing dark by the time he reached the Sprite. Supper was ready, having eaten which, and had a smoke, he went outside for a last look around before turning in to get some sleep. During the time he had been inside a great change had taken place. Darkness was setting on the face of the lake when he saw it last. Now it was bathed in the pale, mellow light of the nearly full moon.

His roving gaze was suddenly arrested by alighting on what seemed a human figure at some distance, which, seen in the flood of ghostly light, had something weird in its appearance. He was trying to convince himself that it was something inanimate, so immovable was it, when its moving showed him that his first conjecture was the correct one. Toward him it came in as straight a line as the uneven nature of the ground would admit. Gradually the skin on Leon's forehead contracted; then a little tremor ran through his frame; then his flesh began to actually creep. The nearer the figure came to him the more weird became its appearance. There was something unreal about it; it seemed

more like a form of mist than one of flesh and blood; the pale light of the moon heightened the effect. Presently Leon clutched the rail, while a gasping sound came from his throat, for he was willing to swear he could see through the figure, could see the rocks behind it.

"Fool! Why did you come here? You are in danger! Fly ere it be too late!" now came in hollow tones, as if from a tomb.

CHAPTER V.—The "Hawk."

"Thunder! That was a rub!"

"Ay—ay, that it was!"

"Down below with you, Jack, and see if anything has started—if we have sprung a leak anywhere. Careful, now, when you open the cabin doors!"

"Ay—ay!"

"Hold up! Not yet; there's a big one coming right up under our stern. Jerusalem! it will wash our decks! Every man hold on for life!"

Ke-bung! First striking with a thud under the schooner's stern, the roller curled over the rear rail, broke, and the mass of water went rushing up the deck, and then poured in miniature cascades from her scuppers.

"Now's your time, Jack, before another of 'em comes along!"

"Ay—ay!" with which response on his lips the mate of the Hawk opened the cabin doors and darted into the cabin, closing the doors behind him to prevent the ingress of water. Fifteen minutes later he reappeared on deck.

"Is she sprung anywhere?" was the anxious query with which he was greeted.

"Not a spring! Cap, she's a darling, and is tight as a wash-tub and sound as a dollar."

"Good enough!" said the captain, in a tone of relief. "Give a hand here at the wheel, Jack."

"Ay—ay!"

It was the schooner which had come into contact with the Sprite. Contrary to Leon's belief, the schooner weathered the storm. Compelled to scud before the gale, as this shifted its quarter, the Hawk's course was changed, until in the last stages of the storm the vessel was being hurried toward Fox Isles, instead of away from them, as in the early part of night. By daylight Fox Isles were in sight, and, though the wind still blew stiffly, the Hawk was again manageable.

"Will you venture it, cap?" asked Jack Bolen, the mate, as he advanced to the captain's side.

"Yes," was the reply. "I don't like to run in during daylight, but after such a storm there will be a slight chance of being seen, as all the lake vessels will be far out of their courses."

"But won't it be too risky? We may get a hole in our bottom."

"Not while I have hold of the wheel," answered Captain Roswell, with a smile.

There was something singular about that man. Tall, broad-shouldered, handsome-faced—an Apollo in form, a Hercules in strength, with a high and noble forehead and an expressive and intelligent eye, he seemed out of place at the helm of a craft like this. His complexion was only slightly bronzed, and his brown hair laid in loose

curls over his forehead. Even when at rest, his face expressed a depth of character such as few men possess. When he spoke, his accent was such as plainly showed that he was a man whom it would be dangerous to thwart or disobey. And even the Hawk seemed to know—insensible wood and iron, and canvas, and rope through she was—when his strong hand undertook her guidance. She seemed to sail steadily the instant his hands grasped the spokes of the wheel. True to his prediction, he worked the Hawk in past the line of dangerous breakers, and rounded to at the dock so skilfully that the shock of contact was scarcely greater than that when the lips of an ardent lover salutes the glowing cheek of the girl he loves. On the rude dock, the three men seen by Leon in the glare of the beacon-fire, were awaiting the schooner's approach, and taking her lines when they were thrown out, the Hawk was quickly made fast. Captain Roswell's first inquiry was whether any vessel had been wrecked on the isles during the night. From the course the unknown steamboat had been on, he thought she must surely have been wrecked here.

"No," was the reply. "But a steamboat had a close shave for it, and if the wind hadn't hurled around a p'int or two just in the nick of time, she'd a-gone to pieces on the rocks yonder."

"She got away safely, though?"

"Yes."

"Humph! Well, Jack, I'll leave it to you to see to unloading. Have Scipio brought up to the cave!" having issued which orders, Captain Roswell strode away without waiting for a reply.

At some short distance from the shore, Captain Roswell's face brightened. Just before the entrance to a cave, half-natural, half-artificial, stood a beautiful young girl.

"Back again!" he said, in a tone that, though grave, also denoted pleasure, and the stern face relaxed into something like a smile.

"I'm glad to see you, uncle!"

"And how has my little May been during my absence?"

"Well, uncle, very well, only a little lonesome sometimes," and then she put up her lips, on which he pressed a kiss in that silent manner of his.

Turning around now, she preceded him into the cave, so artfully made that it might defy the strictest scrutiny to discover it. An overhanging rock had been taken advantage of in commencing the construction of this secret retreat. From the tops of this rock, trunks of trees, placed close together, had been sloped to a point at least twenty feet from the base of the rock. The outside of these tree trunks had been covered with cement, and then a layer of several feet of earth, into which any quantity of bushes had been transplanted, giving it the appearance of a natural bank of earth. And yet there were spacious chambers behind it. The cave was twenty feet deep, and nearly a hundred in length. To it were two entrances. One led into a section divided by a thick wall from the main part of the cave, for the use of May Meredith and the old negro woman who waited on her. The second entrance led into a couple of good-sized rooms where the men slept, and beyond these

was a large storehouse, filled more than half with many and various kinds of merchandise.

"I'm so glad you're safe," said May, as Captain Roswell dropped into a large, cushioned chair. "I was afraid you would try to run in to the island last night, and I myself stood long on the beach, and saw that the fires were kept brightly burning."

"And did my little niece really do as much as that for the sake of her smuggler uncle?" with a sarcastic laugh. "Why, since my last visit, when you read us a lecture on the sin of smuggling, I imagined that you would rather have quenched the fire."

"Oh, uncle——"

"Hush!" and his eyes flashed angrily, being vexed that he had allowed himself to speak in this manner. In a minute he spoke again, in an altered tone.

"During the storm last night Scip was tossed against his berth and badly bruised, if not seriously hurt. I am going to leave him here this trip, and will be pleased with you if you attend to him a little."

"I shall do as you wish, uncle," was the low-toned reply, after which a lengthy silence followed.

During this Captain Roswell sat with bent head, his eyes fixed almost moodily on the floor, while May Meredith's eyes would rest for long spells together on him, then would flit away, then return again, all the while lighted by an expression of mingled fear and love. Very few more words passed between them. Just before parting he presented her with silk for a dress, for which she thanked him. Holding her two hands in his, he gazed intently for a full minute and then muttered:

"If you had only been the son!"

"What do you mean?" she quickly asked.

"Why, this—good-by," and bending to kiss her, he then strode away.

All the goods to be unloaded were already stored; and the lines being cast off, the Hawk stood out into the lake, and in an hour or a little more had disappeared from sight. Scip's injuries had been looked after, and May Meredith had trimmed her lamp and was just commencing to read, when, after first knocking, a man entered.

"What's wrong, Ben?" demanded May.

"The steamboat we saw last night has entered the bay, and by this time is tied fast to the dock."

"What can we do?"

"First of all, none of us must go outside, excepting myself."

"Well," said May, "and you?"

"I will play the ghost game again," was the reply.

"Is it wise to do so?" said May, thoughtfully. "On board of a steamboat there must necessarily be intelligent men, who will not be frightened as easily as fishermen."

"We must try it, for the Gull should be here to-night. Desperate cases require desperate remedies."

With which he took his departure.

CHAPTER VI.—A Vain Search.

Few people are possessed of as little superstition as entered into the composition of Leon Leroy's character, and yet he could not help shivering and feeling disagreeable at sight of this strange figure, through which he thought he could see. Let fear once become aroused, and it is wonderful with what horrors the imagination can invest the simplest thing. So it was in the present instance with Leon. The weird appearance of the moon, had impressed him deeply; imagination had done the rest. At the sound of those hollow-toned words he was staggered and made actually weak, for at the moment he felt as if they were really uttered by some other than a mortal like himself. And yet, as the reader has ample reason for supposing, it was none other than Ben, playing ghost.

Having uttered these words, Ben began retreating slowly, keeping his eyes fixed on Leon, fearing that he might take it into his head to draw a weapon. Indeed, it was only a brief space of time ere Leon felt for his firearms. Only a few seconds was he oppressed by that nameless terror. Then he recovered his courage, if not all of his wits, and would have liked to send a bullet at the figure. If it were immaterial, it would not be harmed; if it were flesh and blood, the trickster would be properly punished. But he did not have his weapons at hand. Making a dash inside, he reached down George's revolvers from the hook on which they hung in the engine-room, and then sprang outside again, ready for a shot. But the figure had vanished completely, short as was the interval of time it had taken Leon to procure the weapons.

When satisfied that the figure had really disappeared, he returned inside, his face grave, wondering what it was best to do. He finally concluded to tell all on board exactly of what he had witnessed. His passengers exchanged glances of intelligence as they listened to the narration of Leon. They did not believe it to be anything unearthly, nor did Leon, now that he was in his sober senses.

"We must remain until morning, and then search the island," said one of the passengers.

"Right," rejoined Leon. "And for fear of harm to the Sprite, a guard had better be maintained all night. I am so completely fagged out that I shall be obliged to call on you to act as sentries after midnight. Up to that time Dederick can watch."

Matters having been thus arranged, Leon laid down, and so fatigued was he that his head scarcely touched the pillow before he fell asleep. About midnight Dederick awakened him and drew him out on deck, and there called his attention to what resembled the glow of another beacon fire. He would have at once started off toward it but for the reflection that every foot of the island was unknown to him, and he could not foresee the dangers into which he might run. It was in reality a glow of a beacon to warn the Gull not to approach the island. Returning to bed, Leon slept soundly until just before daylight, when, by his orders, he was called.

Breakfast was soon ready, and just before sunrise the meal was eaten, and then all but

Dederick and Starr started on an exploring tour. They found no employment for the weapons they carried. So far as they could discover, the island was uninhabited. In the direction whence they had seen the glow of fire at midnight they found a spot where a fire had at some time been burning on the smooth surface of a rock. But neither embers nor ashes were there now, and it was impossible to say whether they had been swept away by human hands or the elements. So they returned to the Sprite no wiser than when they had set out. The search had been as vain as any search that ever was made.

"There must have been someone on the island last night, but I'll swear no living creature is on it now," said one of the passengers.

"I'll take an affidavit to the same effect," said another. "We have been over every foot of it, and there's neither house nor hut, nor any other place on it in which a rabbit could hide."

Certain as they were of this, the reader knows how greatly they were mistaken. Not a man of them, in fact, but had been most thoroughly scrutinized. It was voted by those on the Sprite that they might as well be off at once, and the lines being cast loose, Leon piloted the gallant little craft out of the bay into the lake's broad expanse. They had been some time under way when Leon received a visit, and was surprised on learning the particulars of the true characters of his passengers. They felt that they could rely on his discretion, they said, and it might be better for him to know the truth. They were—at least two of them—employees of the revenue department of the government. They were not common thief-takers or smuggler-hunters, but were out West on measure, and were now taking this trip up the lake to gain some idea in regard to the extent of the smuggling, which, it was said, was extensively carried on.

"You can depend on my integrity," was the simple reply of Leon.

"Of course, as you now understand, we are combining business and pleasure. We wish to pass a few days around and in the strait, visiting the best fishing-grounds, while at the same time keeping a weather eye open for the benefit of smugglers."

"Very well."

In accordance with this briefly outlined programme, Leon piloted the Sprite to several different fishing stations, and it was plain (as they say, "to a person with half an eye") that the revenue officers were more bent on sport than business, probably earning their salaries in the most pleasant way. Two days the Sprite lay fastened to the dock of a rude hamlet, so small as not to be dignified by a name, inhabited by a few fishermen and watermen. Just as the lines were being cast off, preparatory to departure, four roughly dressed men came in sight.

"I say, cap!" cried one.

"Well?" and Leon leaned out of the pilot-house window.

"Which way are you bound?"

"Up the strait."

"Well, if it wouldn't be askin' too much of you, would you give me and my comrades a lift?"

"I don't know——"

Leon hardly knew what to say. He hardly liked the appearance of the men, and yet he was

too kind-hearted to feel like refusing to perform a kindness that was in his power.

"I don't know——" and he hesitated.

"We'll pay our way if you say so, cap," said the first speaker. "I wouldn't ask you, only I've just heard that my wife's likely to die, and it takes so thunderin' long to go by way of the road," and the fellow's voice trembled as if with half-suppressed emotion.

Put in this guise, the appeal touched Leon's heart.

"Never mind about fare—jump aboard," he kindly told them, and when one of them afterward came into the pilot-house and had talked with him a while, Leon upbraided himself for having suspected them. Naught that was not right occurred until after darkness had fallen that night. Dederick suddenly appeared in the pilot-house about eleven o'clock.

"I don't vas like de actions of dem four carls," he said, with a shake of his head. "Dey vas just a-talkin' togedder by der gangway in vhis-pers. I bet me dot ——"

"What do you bet?"

"Dot dey goomed aboard von de litle Sprite for nix goot."

Leon was thoughtfully silent for a moment, and then he said:

"Go down, Dederick, and keep a sharp watch on them."

While Dederick was in the pilot-house a scene such as he feared was being enacted on the main-deck. The passengers had "turned in" an hour before, and were all asleep. The quartette had entered the engine-room, and without giving Starr time to become suspicious they seized hold of him, and one held a revolver to his head, while the others bound him hand and foot. White-faced and wild-eyed, wondering what the villains were going to do next, the young engineer was penned in one corner of the engine-room. A minute later Leon's voice was heard through the speaking-tube.

"George—George! Is everything all right on the main deck?"

The villains for one moment looked blankly at each other. Then one of them made a motion toward Starr, and he was at once dragged to the tube.

"Answer yes," hissed one of the desperadoes, placing the cold muzzle of a "barker" to his temple. "Answer as I bid you, or I'll scatter your brains over the floor."

George remained silent.

"George, are you there? Why don't you answer? Is everything all right?"

"Answer!" snarled the villain, who seemed to be in command of the others.

"I won't!" cried George. "If I say aught, it will be to warn him."

"The knife—quick! It is not so noisy!" George heard, with blanching cheek and sinking heart.

to murder him. But the young fellow's wits did not desert him. If he was to lose his life anyhow, it should not be until he had placed Leon on his guard. His lips parted. He was in the act of shouting to Leon through the tube, when a savage oath betokened his discovery. Quick as a flash a pair of strong hands grasped and choked him into silence. Whether or not they really intended to murder him, the knife, at any rate, was passed to him who had asked for it. Before it could have been used Dederick Donner appeared on the scene.

"Dunder und blitzen—vat vas dis? Haf dey got you Shorge?"

"Yes!" George was enabled to gasp, the grasp on his throat being relaxed in the surprise consequent on Dederick's sudden appearance.

"Well, I bade me dot I makes dem sick!" with which Dederick lunged out with his clenched right fist, too one of the fellows beneath the ear, lifted him clear off his feet, and then by the use of his foot, succeeded in stretching him on the floor.

"Curse the Dutchman!"

"Go for him!"

"Shoot him!"

"Knife him!"

So the villains ordered each other, but none ventured to approach Dederick, who was dancing from one side to the other, his fists flashing this way and that in regular prize ring style. The heavy fall of the fellow floored by Dederick had awakened the passengers of the Sprite, and they could now be heard turning hastily out. Dederick's appearance was an unlucky contretemps, and being unprepared for it, the rascals knew not how to act. Leon had waited impatiently for some reply from George, and his ear being at the tube, he had heard the noise of the fall, and knew that something was wrong.

"George, will you answer?" he called down through the tube.

"I vill!" shouted Dederick. "Dem four vellers vas houneyvachels; I haf knocked de sauerkraut out of you, und I vill do de same py der resd if dey don'd vas ged out putt'v kvick."

The reply startled Leon, and on the impulse of the moment, he was about to fly to the lower deck; but recollecting himself, he knew that it was hardly safe to leave the pilot house and let the Sprite take care of herself. And so, in an agony of apprehension, he kept his ear to the tube. With a stern face he released his revolvers, and placed them so as to be easily got at. If the desperadoes should make themselves masters of the main deck they should at least receive a warm reception when they reached him. The villains looked blandly at each other. What was to be done? Before any could devise a plan it was too late to be of any use. They might have made themselves masters of the vessel after a desperate fight and the shedding of much blood; but this did not seem part of their plan, for as the passengers appeared before one engine-room door they bolted out of the other. The last one was assisted by the boot of Dederick.

"Himmel!" exclaimed the Dutch deckhand, limping after delivering the kick. "I must have struck a bone. If I dit, I dinks me dot he don'd was sit down gomfortably in de next veek."

The villains retreated to the fore-deck, and the

CHAPTER VII.—Diamond Cut Diamond.

"The knife—quick! Why are you so infernally slow about it?"

George Starr shuddered; it was horrible to witness the cool manner in which they prepared

passengers released Starr. This attack was a strange affair and none of them knew what to make of it. Two of the gentlemen ascended to the pilothouse to keep Leon company, and the others remained to help guard the engine-room. By means of the speaking-tube Leon soon received from Starr a minute description of all that had occurred. Leon was puzzled. He saw clearly that had they wished to murder George they could easily have done so, and could as easily have shot Dederick in the time that intervened before the arrival of the passengers on the scene.

"What shall you do?" he was finally asked.

"The best way, I believe, will be not to take any notice of them, but to head the Sprite for some port where they can be given into custody."

The four villains never ventured to leave the foredeck. Had they done so they would have received a very warm reception. They remained so quiet that at last Leon became quite uneasy, although not as much so as the others. Still he persisted in his determination not to take any notice of them. Hours passed; it was very near daybreak, when suddenly there came a heavy plunge, the rattling of a chain, and then a sudden shock which nearly threw flat to the floor all those in the pilot-house.

"They have let the anchor go, and it has reached bottom, and has taken hold!" Leon explained to his pallid-faced companions. Then, turning to the tube, he was just in time to hear Starr's anxious query as to what had happened.

"It's only the anchor," was the reply. "Now a grim laugh floated up from the foredeck. After waiting a moment to see if they had judged correctly as to the length of the cable, the rascals were now exhibiting their pleasure at the success of their scheme.

"Put on more steam," Leon called down through the tube. "We may be able to break the cable."

George put on every ounce of steam, and though it was sufficient to make every fiber of the Sprite quiver, the cable did not part. As for the anchor, it held for some minutes, and then apparently was torn from its hold on the bottom, for the Sprite suddenly darted forward; but the anchor took a new and firmer hold, and brought up the Sprite "all standing."

"Cut off the steam," cried Leon, in a tone of alarm. "We dare not repeat that experiment again. We might tear the whole bow out of the vessel."

George promptly obeyed, and the Sprite lay at anchor. Soon daylight broke, and land was visible about ten miles away. What was to be done?

"Pilot-house, ahoy!"

"Well, what do you want?" Leon coldly asked, directing his gaze toward the forecastle, whence the call proceeded.

"We want to know what you intend doing?" was the other.

"Take and deliver you up to the law, as you deserve," was the stern reply.

"Oh, you do—do you? Now, see here, let's settle this matter peaceably. Why we came on board is none of your business, save that we intended harm to not a hair of anyone's head. Permit us to take one of the small boats and go, and we will do you no harm now."

"What harm can you do us, anyhow?"

"A great deal. To speak plainly, and waste no time, we know that we are in a box, and that you could turn us over to the law. Well, we don't intend to be. We have barricaded the entrance to the forecastle through the hold, and you can't reach us here. And now, unless you are reasonable and let us go, we intend to scuttle the Sprite, and take equal chances with yourselves of reaching the shore alive."

There was no mistaking that the speaker was in dead earnest. It was a case of diamond cut diamond. Which diamond was hardest? Leon secretly sent Dederick into the hold, where he learned that the villains had spoken truly about the barricading. If they could only delay, could only stave off a decision for a while, it would have suited Leon splendidly, as they were right in the track of the lake vessels, and within an hour or two would probably be able to hail and obtain assistance. But the villains were equally as well aware of this fact, and demanded an immediate answer. This being delayed, the leader ordered one of the other to go down and commence boring holes through the Sprite's bottom. Dederick, a few minutes later, reported that water was rising in her hold. Leon ground his teeth. It was gall and wormwood to him to think of permitting them to escape, let alone assisting them to do so by delivering the Sprite's small boat to them. But there was no help for it. There could no longer be any doubt of their being able to carry their threats into execution, and to save his gallant little craft he consented to their terms. Dederick was instructed to lower the small boat and convey it beneath the Sprite's bows. If ever a man did anything reluctantly it was done by Dederick in obeying this order. When informed that the boat was ready, the villains filed up from the forecastle and clambered into it, then shoved away from the steamer, watched by Leon and his passengers. How Dederick had managed to do it none of them knew, but when the small boat was some little distance from the Sprite they saw the Dutchman's head above water at its stern, his body and feet being projected forward on a line with the keel.

"The foolish fellow!" cried Leon. "He wants to save the boat and denounce them when they land."

Then, suddenly catching their breath, they interestedly watched what followed. They could guess what the oarsmen had said—namely, that the small boat pulled heavy, as if she had a drag attached to her.

"Perhaps there is," had been the reply, and heads were thrust over the side and the boat's run scrutinized. Then the bows were looked at, and then her stern. Dederick was discovered, and his friends shuddered when they saw a revolver at the head of the rash but brave Dutchman.

CHAPTER VIII.—Scip, the Negro.

"Are you hurt much, Scip?"

"Not berry much, missy," was the reply of the old negro, and the tenderness of May's inquiry brought a look of affection to his eyes. "All you folks allers been kind to Scip."

"All of my folks!" May quickly repeated. "Scip good Scip, won't you please tell me about them? I know a little now—a very little—from what uncle has said in his unguarded moments. Won't you tell me all about my parents?"

"Can't do it, missy."

"Why not?"

"'E cap'n bad man to go ag'inst. Kill Scip if tell. 'Sides dat, Scip take oaf never to tell till cap'n give he permission."

May Meredith smiled.

"Does Dinah know?" she suddenly asked.

"She was dere 'long wi' me," said Scip. "But, Missy May, please doan' go for to git poor ole Dinah inter trouble."

May found that nothing could be learned from the old negro in relation to the secret of her life, and desisting from the vain attempt, she returned to her own apartment in the cave. She asked a question or two of her negro woman, Dinah.

"Doan' know nuffin' about it."

This was the stolid reply of the tutored negress to each question, and May had so much affection for this aged negress, who had watched over her from infancy, that she could not put her in danger by wheedling from her what she so much wished to know. That William Roswell was her uncle she had no doubt. But who were her parents? She felt in her heart that they were gentlefolk, at least, and a word dropped now and then had assured her that her uncle had not always been what he now was. Driving the whole vexing subject from her mind, she had been preparing to spend the evening in reading, when, as before related, Ben had entered with the information of a steamer's having entered the little bay. After having played ghost, and finding that it did not result in the steamer's departure, Ben had gone to the other side of the island, and had lighted a fire to warn the Gull against approaching the island. Brushing up the debris of the fire he then returned to the cave, and with all the rest of its inmates remained closely housed. Once or twice when the searchers approached the cave there was a momentary alarm lest the retreat should be discovered. When the disappointed searchers, returning in a body toward the Sprite, paused near the cave, a number of pairs of curious eyes scrutinized them closely. Among these pairs of eyes was counted Scip's. At first the negro's gaze had been only a curious one, but of a sudden a deep and profound interest was infused into his manner. So marked was the change that May observed it, and began watching him. Scip's eyes appeared about starting from their sockets, and a deep agitation began to convulse his frame.

"Bress de Lord!" he gasped.

"What's the matter, Scip?" inquired May, laying a hand on his shoulder.

"Oh, Missy May, dis an a bery happy day. Won't de cap'n be glad!"

"What does all this mean?" said May, in a mystified tone.

"In good time missy know all," was the quiet reply, and she knew that nothing could be extracted from him.

When she saw the steamer leave the bay her eyes followed it with regret, for she felt that on its deck was carried that which would have cleared up the dark and impenetrable veil which

covered her life. That night the Gull run into the bay and took on board a miscellaneous cargo, to be delivered to different agents along the lake shore. A few nights later and again the signal fire was lighted, and the Hawk rounded to, and was moored fast at ten o'clock exactly. Scip hobbled to the door of the cave, and there awaited the coming of William Roswell.

"Well, Scip," said the latter in a not unkind tone, "are you recovered yet?"

"Not quite, sah. Massa Roswell, I'se seen him."

"Seen who?"

"De boy!"

The smuggler captain started violently, and clutched Scip's shoulder with so firm a hand that the negro gritted his teeth to prevent crying out with pain.

"How do you know you saw him?" in a stern tone.

"Golly, he got de family look!"

"Where did you see this person? Here on the island?"

"Yes; he pilot ob a steamer called de Water-Sprite."

"What name does he go by?"

"Dey called him Leon."

"Ha! Send Jack Bolen here."

"Yes, sah."

And while Scip hobbled away on this mission, Captain Roswell thoughtfully entered the cave. Circumstances had made an eavesdropper of May. Advancing to meet her uncle, she was just within the door when this conversation occurred. Wittingly the high-minded girl would not have stopped to listen, but as it was thrust on her, she could not help hearing. She had retreated, and when her uncle entered, advanced from the further end of the apartment to give him greeting. Hardly had they seated themselves when Bolen entered.

"Jack, what do you know about a vessel called the Water-Sprite?"

"Not much."

"Then you have neglected your duty, for you are aware that it is my duty that no craft shall ply the waters of this lake without our having a complete record of her."

"I knows it, cap'n, but the Sprite, as they called her for short, only changed hands a little while ago. She ain't in business, and is only a pleasure craft. All that I know is that she is owned in Milwaukee by two young fellows, one of which is pilot and cap'n, and t'other the engineer."

"Can you give me their names?"

"Yes," pulling out a book, and consulting it. "Leon Leroy and George Starr."

"You can go."

During the several hours which Roswell spent with May, he was much preoccupied, and once or twice he so totally forgot the presence of May that he ground his teeth, and muttered aloud:

"Surely Scip must be mistaken. It cannot be that fortune plays into my hands, when years of unremitting toil resulted only in disappointment. But if it is him—if it is——"

He ground his teeth savagely, sprang to his feet, and commenced striding to and fro.

"Blood shall flow—blood shall flow!—the prophecy shall be fulfilled!"

A deep and terrible passion seemed to be seething in Roswell's heart, for his face was convulsed, and his eyes were burning with a lurid glare. His appearance smote the heart of the gentle girl with terror.

"Uncle—uncle—please don't look so terrible," she pleaded.

Roswell started, bit his lip, and seemed to curse himself beneath his breath for having forgotten her presence.

"Have I been talking aloud?" he demanded, in an angry tone. "Did I say anything?"

"Nothing of any importance," she returned, and then burst into tears. Instantly this man of extreme passions melted, and was as soft and tender as a mother who croons over her babe.

"Forgive me, little one, I did not mean to frighten you," he kindly said, and until he left kept endeavoring to remove the impression left by his harsh words.

The Hawk was at last ready to leave. Kissing May good-by, Roswell moodily stalked to the dock, where he found Scip.

"Will blood run?"

So Scip asked, and in his tone there was an accent that was almost fiendish.

"Ay, blood shall run," with which reply he stepped on board. In a few minutes more the Hawk was standing out into the lake, and when clear of the island was headed for the straits. In these a halt was made, and into the small boat descended Jack Bolen and four of the Hawk's crew.

"You understand your duty, Jack?" was the captain's parting words.

"I do."

The five were sent ashore, and the Hawk proceeded on her way through the strait.

"Well, boys, this is a wild enough place," said Jack, looking around at the spot where they had landed. "Well, let's be getting on; we've got a long tramp ahead of us afore we reach a civilized town."

"Where you'll be apt to stay longer than you expect, I'm thinking," reflected one of the others.

"Curse you, Jack Bolen! I've never forgotten the day you flogged me, and now that the chance is flung in my way, I'm going to betray you to the officers."

Never suspecting that in their midst was an intended traitor, the smugglers trudged on for some miles, and then entered a town which shall be nameless. It was just growing dark, and it was intended to remain here all night. Rooms were engaged at a second-class hotel, and then the smugglers disposed of themselves as they pleased. Four of their number had finally collected, and were engaged in playing cards in the hotel sitting-room, when the door of the room opened, admitting the traitor and eight officers, some of them ordinary farmers hastily sworn in for the occasion.

"There they are!" cried the traitor, pointing at them. "Arrest them! I declare them to be smugglers and pirates."

"Traacherous bound!" yelled Jack Bolen, springing to his feet. "Draw, boys, draw, and the devil gets the soul of the man who bars our way hence!"

The smugglers made a break toward a window, but the officers sprang to head them off.

"You tempt your fate—take it!"

Crack! Crack! Crack!

"This for you—traitor!"

Crack! The treacherous smuggler uttered a wild cry, flung up his arms, and then falling, lay there on the floor weltering in his blood.

"Now, then—all together!" shrieked Jack Bolen, and the daring quartette flung themselves forward with the swiftness and fierceness of a tornado.

CHAPTER IX.—Kidnappers.

All on board the Sprite were in momentary expectation of hearing a pistol shot, and seeing Dederick sink beneath the surface with a bullet in his brain. But in this they were mistaken. With an oath or two the man who was holding the revolver at Dederick's head withdrew the weapon and concealed it again.

"Let go!" he now hoarsely ordered the Dutchman. "Let go—and swim for your life, as you deserve!"

With all his clothing on, and his boots as well, it would be no easy task to swim to the side of the Sprite, and Dederick hesitated about complying.

"Come, now?" said the other grimly. "I give you a chance for your life, which you should consider as an extremely fortunate circumstance. Swim—let go now—or I'll crack your knuckles, which will cramp 'em so't they can't be used."

The Dutchman knew that this would be the case, and with a groan he prepared to let go. He looked up into the face above him. But it was hard and relentless, and had no more pity in it than if it had been carved in stone. It would be useless, Dederick decided mentally, to ask him to return nearer the Sprite. Looking up into that stern face, Dederick was surprised to find that his life was spared.

"Let go!"

He knew that longer delay would only make matters worse, and he instantly let go of the small boat, which immediately shot away. Dederick had no time to spare, as he well knew, and at once began to strike out toward the vessel; but it was almost impossible to remain afloat, let alone swim.

"Take off your boots!" shouted Leon.

"Vat I vill do with 'em? Hold dem in my teet?" panted Dederick.

"No; let them go to the bottom of the lake."

"Blitzen! Dey vos mine pest poots! Vat for you taken me?"

Leon saw that the stubborn Dutchman might lose his life in trying to save his boots, and he called to Dederick to let his boots go and he would provide another pair of newer and better ones.

"Ish dot so? Newer and petter vons? Den dey must go!"

At once Dederick commenced a series of gymnastic exercises in the water, and finally succeeded in freeing himself of his boots, after which, although it was only by the hardest of labor, he managed to get near enough to the Sprite before giving out to get held of a rope which was cast to him. In a few minutes more he was on deck, dripping wet and exhausted. Now that Leon saw the faithful Dutchman in

safety, he bethought himself of the Sprite's condition. A hasty examination showed that the water was slowly rising in the vessel's hold, which was proof sufficient that one or more auger holes had been bored through the Sprite's bottom. Providing himself with a lantern, a hammer, some chisels, and several pieces of soft pine wood, he descended into the fore-castle. A gurgling noise guided him to the spot where the hole had been bored. There was only one. Making a shapely plug of the pine wood, he inserted it into the auger hole and drove it home tight, thus cutting off the ingress of water. The pumps being started, the vessel was soon free of water. Leon now turned his attention to the hoisting of the anchor, which proved to be a long and tedious task, as on examination he found that to reach bottom all the chain had been paid out except about six fathoms. There were supposed to be on board of the Sprite at the time of the purchase one hundred and fifty fathoms of cable, or nine hundred feet. And nearly all of this had to be hauled in.

The villains had been fortunate in finding bottom at all with many fathoms of chain, for in some places Lake Michigan is fifteen hundred feet in depth. The small boat meanwhile was rapidly diminishing in size as the distance increased, and from having become a mere black speck was finally lost to sight entirely. The anchor having been finally catted, and everything being again straight, the Sprite was headed further into the strait. The next day they were at Mackinaw, and here remained one day. Then, returning again to the lake, they made brief stops at Little Traverse Bay and at Grand Traverse Bay, after which they headed for Milwaukee. The latter place was reached in due season, and the Sprite's passengers declared themselves much pleased with their trip, considering their dangers, now that they were passed, as so much spice to the affair to give it a zest.

"And have you learned enough about the smugglers?" asked Leon, a merry twinkle in his eyes. They had not gone a step out of their way on this score.

"Oh, yes; sufficient to make an elaborate report," was the reply. "By the way, I shouldn't wonder if those four fellows were smuggler spies, or in some way connected with them."

"I don't know," said Leon, his face at once becoming grave. "To me the whole affair was inexplicable, and I am satisfied that beneath their visit is an unraveled mystery."

It certainly was a very queer affair, taken as a whole. And as such it was voted by all concerned in it, and by the few who heard the narration of what had occurred. Bidding good-by to his passengers, Leon watched the train which the next day swiftly bore them away toward Chicago, whence they were to return East. The next day the Sprite was chartered by another party of gentlemen, who wished to be taken some distance up the lake, to be gone two weeks or more. They were to start on Thursday morning, it then being Tuesday. Warmly had the two lads been welcomed home, where they took care to so color the relation of what had occurred as not to raise any undue alarm concerning their safety when absent on these trips. So very pleasant was it to be idlers again for a time,

that the Sprite was left under the guardianship of Dederick, while they remained at home. But on Wednesday evening, as they were to make a start early the next, George thought it would be well to go on board and get his fires ready for starting. He delayed going on board until about nine o'clock, and the night being without a moon it was very dark in the neighborhood of the dock. Dederick was found on the alert, for he hailed George the moment he came near the Sprite.

"You vos agoin' for to fix de fires, eh?" he repeated, when George stated why he had come on board. "Den ve will start in de morning?"

"Yes."

"Den, vile you is aboard, I dinks me dot I go up der streed und got me some smoke tobak."

The Dutchman had not returned by the time George had got his kindlings laid and the fire ready for setting a match to. As he was pacing the deck he heard a step outside on the dock, whom he naturally supposed to be that of Dederick. The person sprang aboard and entered through the door. At precisely the same moment there came a slight jar at the outside guard of the vessel, and then George heard a number of persons hastily clambering up on deck. He was a little startled, but could not dream of danger in such a place, and turned to speak to Dederick. A single lantern, suspended from a hook in one of the slender beams overhead, shed a sickly light over a contracted portion of the deck. But sickly as the light was, it was sufficient to discern that it was not Dederick toward whom he had turned. He gave a start of mingled surprise and alarm. Just then the door opened and half a dozen men, who had come in a small boat, rushed forward as the single individual uttered a guttural exclamation. Starr was unarmed, as he remembered with a groan. But, quickly clenching his fists, he stood on guard, and when they sprang toward him—

Spat! Spat! Spat!

"Curse him! He hits hard!" angrily growled someone.

"Careful!" said a deep and stern voice. "Careful! Remember my orders!"

"Help—help!" from Starr.

Somebody clapped his hands. There was a simultaneous rush, and Starr was caught hold of and choked into silence, which being accomplished, the grip on his throat was released. He was then hurried across the deck, and dropped into a small boat.

"Be 'silent—make no noise—submit quietly to your fate, and not a hair of your head shall be harmed. But at your peril attempt to thwart my will!" said a deep voice, expressing power and determination. "Give way, boys!" and off into the lake the kidnapped engineer was carried. What could they want of him?

Dederick came back to the Sprite, but George had disappeared.

About this time a lady called at the Starr residence. She met Mr. Starr and she explained to him that she had called to save Leon from a great peril, and that he must be warned from leaving the house at night without sufficient escort. She would not give her name, and was just about to leave when Leon came in. Turning to him she said: "Leon Leroy, do just what this gentleman"

shall advise you to do. "God bless you all." Then she was gone. The next minute Dederick came in with the announcement that George had disappeared. But when they reached the Sprite there was George on deck. How had he escaped?

The reason why May was at Mr. Starr's house was because Captain Roswell asked her if she would like to go to the city with him on the Hawk, and hearing the plans of the smugglers on the voyage in reference to Leon, she determined to outwit them. She had just returned to the Hawk when who should come on board but Captain Roswell accompanied by George Starr. No sooner than George set foot on deck when the captain discovered he had the wrong man. It was Leon whom they were after. George was conveyed ashore, and set free. George returned to the Sprite, which is the reason that Mr. Starr and Leon found him there when they boarded the vessel. George now related all that had taken place. It appeared to all three that Leon was the one the smugglers wanted. The next week the Sprite was again chartered by a party of men. A man by the name of Taylor was apparently the head of the party. The vessel was headed out into the lake. At night the party on board turned on Dederick and George and made them prisoners and then succeeded in capturing Leon and serving him in the same way after a desperate struggle. Who and what were these villains who had made prisoners of the Sprite's crew? In spite of all questions, the villains refused to answer, except to say that no personal harm was meant to any of them. They were put into the forecastle and it was fastened down tight. Their captors sailed the Sprite to a town where one of their number was a prisoner condemned to die. They succeeded in breaking into the jail and releasing him. Five minutes later they were retreating toward the Sprite, followed by the shrill cries of the jailor.

Meantime the Hawk had been run into the harbor of the city where the Starrs lived and badly damaged. Being repaired temporarily she and her villainous crew set sail for Fox Isles again. When she arrived there the utmost consternation prevailed. The Gull had been followed into the harbor by a revenue tug filled with men.

Meantime Taylor and his crowd with the escaped prisoner reached the Sprite and set sail. But she was pursued by a packet and the prisoners were let out of the forecastle and told if they wanted to save the Sprite they must endeavor to run away from their pursuers. Leon and George, thus threatened, took hold and soon the Sprite was drawing away from the packet. At this point Leon turned the Sprite into a narrow channel and escaped the packet on account of the vast difference in the draught of the two vessels.

CHAPTER X.—A Fruitless Search.

With undaunted mien, Captain Roswell heard that a tugboat filled with revenue men, had dogged the Gull, and was now in the little bay.

"What shall we do? They have caught us like rats in a trap, captain," said one scared fellow.

"They have, eh?" with a light laugh. "Much good may it do them. What, ho, there!—captain of the Gull."

"Aye, aye," replied that person, putting in an appearance.

"You have nothing contraband on board?"

"Nothing at all."

"Good! Then we will fool those fellows, sharp as they think themselves. Back into the store-room, there, with these bales and kegs—quick—waste no time—lively—lively, I say!"

When the Gull was sighted a quantity of goods had been brought from the store-room, and it was concerning these that Roswell now issued these rapidly uttered orders. It being night, those on board of the tug could see nothing of what was transpiring on the island, and by the time they landed everything was wrapped in silence, same in the immediate vicinity of the Gull.

"Boat ahoy!" came from on board of the tug as she rounded to alongside of the sailing vessel.

"Ahoy yourself!" was the reply, in a grumbling tone. The revenue men, lanterns in hand, climbed over the Gull's gunwales and lightly sprang to her deck, in the full expectation of finding ample evidence before their eyes of her being engaged in the smuggling trade. To their surprise not a vestige of such evidence was visible.

"Where's the contraband stuff?" the officer presently demanded, in a tone meant to inspire with terror those who heard it.

"What contraband stuff?" innocently asked the Gull's captain, and he now smiled himself, though he turned his face away as he did so.

"Oh, stow it!" was the retort. "You know well enough what I mean, and it will be a point against you if you do not at once make a clean breast of it."

"Clean breast of what?"

"Of your crooked business."

"Crooked business?" in a tone of well-simulated surprise. "Is fishing crooked business? By the way, however, I should like to know by what right you question me and demand an answer?"

"Search her—to work at once!" to his men.

Protesting on principal, the captain in reality did all he could to facilitate a thorough search of his vessel, the result of which filled the officer with chagrin and caused him to swear vigorously. He was thunderstruck for he had confidently expected to find criminating articles on board of the vessel. The fact of not finding any did not convince him that his suspicions were ill-founded, he preferring to think that some trick had been played on him. He signified his intention of remaining beside the Gull until morning, and so informed her captain.

"Very well," said the latter. "Just as you please. But you have made a great mistake."

"Well, why do you steal around in the darkness instead of sailing by daylight?"

The Gull's captain was ready with his reply.

"I hope you will be honorable enough to keep my secret, which explains my night sailing. It is, that at just this place is the best fishing spot in all Lake Michigan, and if I didn't keep it secret, it wouldn't be long afore I couldn't make my bread and butter. We are going to make a cast at daylight, and you can see for yourself."

The explanation seemed reasonable, and was borne out by all that the revenue agent saw. Still he was far from being satisfied. Daylight

came at last, and the Gull's crew were fishermen enough not to make any blunders that were noticeable by the officer, and, as luck had it, the haul was a very rich one. The officer was more puzzled than he would have cared to own, and he got no clearer idea of the fraud which was being practiced upon him when he obtained a view of the island. However, to leave no stone unturned, he ordered his men ashore to search the island. And they explored it thoroughly, not finding anything. The revenue officers determined to leave and lay in wait for the Gull a little north of the island to see if anything suspicious happened. The tug soon after steamed away, leaving the Gull at the dock. In the early shadows of the early evening she was hastily loaded, and then took her departure, unseen by those on the tug, which was slowly cruising to and fro to the northward. No incident worthy of recording occurred until the return of the Hawk, after having had a new bowsprit put in. When Roswell went on board, Jack Bolen exultingly introduced him to a captive. And that captive was—

CHAPTER XI.—Gone!

"A fine way, truly, to exhibit your gratitude," said Leon, bitterly, when he had heard Taylor condemn him and George to be again bound and returned to the hold. "After having saved you—carried you safely through such perils—you reward me thus."

"Spare yourself those sarcastic speeches, for you know as well as I do that you are in our power."

"But why is it that myself and Starr cannot have our liberty on our pledged words as we have just had?"

"I will answer your question fairly. You are no fool, neither am I. I know that you have noticed that our number is augmented by one man. He is a member of a band of men of whom I am the leader. We are sworn by a solemn obligation never to desert each other, and to endanger our own lives should another's be in danger. That man was caught passing counterfeit money, and he shot the officer who came to arrest him. He was tried, condemned, and would have been hung had we not rescued him as we have. It is known that the Sprite was engaged in the affair, and you will be called on to testify, and the less you know the better for yourself and us. We are not monsters—indeed, so far as that goes, we are grateful to you—and I swear that no harm shall befall you and yours!"

Leon and George yielded with as good a grace as possible; suffered themselves to be bound, and again descended into the fore-castle, the hatch of which was immediately battened down.

Clang! One bell—meaning slow up. Clang! Presently it came again, now meaning to unhook and cut off steam.

"We are about to make a landing," said Leon. "I wonder where we are?"

Just then the hatch was raised, and Taylor descended, bearing food in his hands.

"There is something to eat," he said, as he placed it on the floor. "I haven't time to stop to feed you, and you'll have to do it yourselves,

for I'm going ashore for a few hours, and have given strict orders to those who remain not to open the hatch under any circumstances."

"Afraid of us even when bound," laughed Leon, sarcastically. "It is a compliment, indeed!"

Leon could not guess the meaning of the shrewd and peculiar smile which appeared on Taylor's face.

"One thing!" called Leon, as Taylor was ascending the steps. "You understand that we consider ourselves absolved from our pledge?"

"Yes," was his reply, contained in that single word; and then he closed the hatch, just as Leon exclaimed:

"There! the line's out, and they are just snubbing it."

It must have been all of three hours from the time of landing when Leon asked if any of the others had heard even a solitary footstep during that time. Not one of them had.

"Come here, Dederick. You've got good strong teeth; see if you can't chew my bonds in two."

At once the Dutchman set to work at this novel but very difficult task. But an hour's chewing enabled Leon to snap his bonds asunder, and then drawing out his pocket-knife, he speedily freed the rest. They tried the hatch, and found it securely fastened. A board partition divided the fore-castle from the hold, and it suddenly occurred to Dederick that he knew of a board that was loose, which would afford them a means of egress. It did so. They passed through the aperture caused by the removal of the board, and gathered in the hold at the foot of the steps leading to the main deck.

"Single file," whispered Leon. "I will go first, and the rest of you follow in regular order, so as not to impede each other."

So exclaiming, Leon sprang up the steps, and dashed on the main deck, flourishing his club, his eyes sparkling, his face set and resolute, his whole air breathing defiance. After him came his companions, ready and eager for the fray that was to deliver the Sprite again into their possession. In a body they rushed along, prepared to sweep all opposition from their path. But they met with no opposition, nor did any antagonist spring to meet them and dispute the rights they were about to claim.

"What a blockhead I am!" cried Leon. "I ought to have suspected this!"

About ten o'clock George called Leon, once, twice, thrice, but received no reply. Calling to Dederick, he ordered him to go to the pilot-house.

"He was not dere, und de veel was in stay ropes," called Dederick, presently. Alarmed not a little, George caused a hasty search to be made, but Leon was not to be found.

CHAPTER XII.—Leon's Disappearance Explained.

And what was the secret of Leon's disappearance? Simple enough it was when the explanation is given. Standing there in the pilot-house, his eyes directed ahead, and sweeping the surface of the lake, his attention had been riveted by a dark object. Earnestly he had scanned it, and then turning to the tube, he called George,

intending to have him tell Dederick to go on the foredeck and examine this dark object as they reached it. But George was either busy and did not hear, or was outside of the engine-room for a moment, for he made no reply. After having listened, and hearing no answer from George, Leon gazed again at the object, which was now considerably nearer. And it struck him that it was a drifting small boat. Hastily tying fast the wheel, he stepped from the pilot-house, and went to the very edge of the upper deck. There was a boat-hook near by, and with this he determined to secure and catch the strayed and drifting little craft. As he was turning away to go for the hook, he caught his toe on a projection, was thrown off his balance, and the next moment plunged headlong into the lake.

Loudly and frequently he yelled for help, and continued so to do until the vessel had receded to such a distance that her light twinkled, and disappeared suddenly. Then, springing as high out of the water as possible, he glanced swiftly about in quest of the small boat, which had been the indirect cause of his present predicament. At length he saw it. At once he struck out manfully toward the boat, reaching it after a hard and lengthy struggle. To his surprise, he found it to be the small boat belonging to the Sprite—the one taken away by Taylor's party. This fact was almost as much of a puzzle to Leon as his disappearance was to George and the rest of the Sprite's crew. Of the small boat's two oars, one was broken and the other missing, and the boat itself was nearly half filled with water.

In the locker or cuddy in the stern was a bailer and procuring this, Leon soon freed the boat of water. Then, with the painter, he spliced the broken oar, and on it rigged his blue flannel shirt as a sail, while he steered her with a bit of board belonging to her sheathing. Hopefully he laid his course in the direction taken by the Sprite. He thought that as soon as his absence was noticed George would cause the vessel to retrace her course, in case which was done he would be on board again before very long.

"Well," mused Leon, as he watched the Sprite's lights recede until they were on the point of fading entirely from sight, "well, there's no use crying over spilled milk. I'm not as badly off as I might be, not by a good deal. I've got this small boat, and know her to be a good and seaworthy one; she will carry me safely ashore, if handled properly, and I can join the Sprite when she reaches Milwaukee."

Having so decided, Leon ceased longer to allow himself to regret having missed the Sprite, and instead proceeded to occupy his mind in connection with the best and safest course to follow. He glanced earnestly, more than once, up at the sky. At sunset he had felt sure that a storm was not far distant, and, indeed, the sky had been very threatening in appearance. But it was less so now. The sun was rising when Leon discerned a sail at some distance, standing on a course, which, should their respective rates of speed remain the same, must bring them within speaking distance of each other. Leon might have avoided the meeting, but saw no occasion for so doing. The small boat was seen, and was scrutinized long and carefully through a powerful glass in the hands of Jack Bolen. There was

more than usual interest manifested in the scrutiny he bestowed on the face of the small boat's occupant.

"As I live," he chuckled, "here's a stroke of good fortune; it's the lad the cap'n wants to get hold of, Leon Leroy, the pilot of the Sprite!"

Nor was he mistaken, as the reader is well aware. Bolen kept out of sight while the second mate invited Leon on board. He accepted the invitation, but had no sooner reached the deck than he knew that he was a prisoner, for he recognized grinning Jack Bolen as he stepped forward and extended his hand. Leon drew haughtily back. Jack Bolen laughed harshly, but not with any ill-will. He was too well pleased, for he knew how happy the captain would be made by Leon's capture. So Leon's bitter speech drew down on his head no angry resentment, and he was treated kindly and allowed much apparent freedom, though he was closely watched, and knew that instant death would have been the penalty of an attempt at escape. And at last he and Captain Roswell were brought face to face. Sternly and long they eyed each other, with bated breath and agitated hearts, but uttering no word.

"I demand an explanation of your conduct," said Leon.

"You will have an explanation in due season," answered Roswell, "as soon as we reach Canada."

"Then you are a smuggler as well as pirate."

"Leon, the mystery will soon be explained. I am going away, and I want you to pledge to remain here quietly during my absence."

"Force alone can keep me here," said Leon.

"Then force will be employed," and he gave orders to Jack Bolen to prepare to sail at once. Leon was placed in a small chamber with a heavy door from which it was impossible to break out. He was allowed to walk out on the beach the next morning, and during his walk met Roswell's niece May. Ben was with Leon at the time.

In the meantime George Starr was inconsolable for the loss of Leon. The Sprite was put about and went back over the course again. But nothing was seen of him. The evening meal at the Starrs was just over one evening when a Captain Jenkins was announced. It was Captain Roswell in disguise. When Mr. Starr entered the room the captain informed him that while on the lake during the early part of the week he had picked up a man in a little boat who had asked him to deliver a note to that gentleman. Mr. Starr saw at once it was from Leon.

Back on the island Leon, returning to his chamber after his walk, was suddenly aroused from a reverie by a knock on his door.

CHAPTER XIII.—The Interview.

Leon Leroy was greatly excited when he heard the low knocking and the mention of his name, on being awakened near the midnight hour.

"It is the beautiful unknown come to help me to escape," he told himself, and his heart began to beat faster and faster.

"Leon Leroy!" was called again, and the sweetness and music of the tone left no doubt it belonged to May Meredith. "I am your friend."

"Are you going to help me escape?"

"No."

"What! My friend, and not help me escape the clutches of the stern-faced demon who seems to be master here?"

"Hush! You must not speak so of Captain Roswell. He is human as well as yourself. But I only came to assure you of my friendship. Good-by."

"No—no! Do not go yet. I want to talk to you."

"Do you?" and Leon thought he detected a pleased ring in her voice.

"Yes. Can we not meet and talk freely with each other?"

"There is only one way, and that is to pledge Ben your word to make no attempt at escape. Give him your pledge for one day, and then meet me where we met to-day."

"I will be there. I will do as you say."

"Very well. Good-night."

"Good-night!" Leon returned. About the middle of the forenoon, Leon approached the rendezvous. May was there, waiting for him. Leon's eyes brightened, his cheeks flushed with pleasure, and he thought he had never before gazed upon so lovely a creature. Gladly would he have passed the entire day with her, but May said to him "nay!"

"It is already noon. I must go. Good-by."

"But—may——"

Leon paused, taken aback at the sound of his own voice filled with ardor and admiration. May's glance was filled with anything but hatred, and there is no telling what tender love-passages might have followed had not May been alarmed, and fled at the sound of an approaching footstep. It was Ben, in search of Leon, whom he found casting pebbles into the water in a dreamy manner, the whole scene being so artfully acted as to fool Ben completely. The next day Leon refused to pledge his word, having struck a plan which gave promise of escape. He had found a boat, and he determined to make use of it. The next day he got the boat and made for the point of his rendezvous with May.

Never before had any of the opposite sex affected him in the same way as May, and he made up his mind that when he saw her he would adopt a course of vigorous wooing. Leon was deeply disappointed at not finding May there, but sat himself down in hopes of her coming. And as he sat there he fell to dreaming of her. While wrapped up in this occupation, May approached him unheard and unnoticed. He knew nothing of her presence until he felt a pair of warm lips imprinting a kiss on his forehead. Leon's dream was shattered.

She sat down by his side and they entered into conversation.

"May," Leon finally said, "are you any relation to this man Roswell?"

"His niece."

"Do you know yourself to be so?"

"Only from what he has told me," was the reply. "But I will say no more."

"Don't go yet."

"It is necessary."

"But you are not angry with me? You are still my friend? You still think as much of me

as before we met this morning?" he earnestly said.

"Yes."

"You are not mocking me?"

"No. And this is the earnest that I mean what I say," and she calmly raised her lips to be kissed. Leon would have supplemented his salute with a hug, but she would not permit this, and took her leave hastily. He did not see her again that day, nor the next. On that following, he caught just a glimpse of her, and she smiled on him in such a benign way that Leon bit his lip with anger.

"She is younger than I am by several years, and yet she treats me in a patronizing, condescending manner, as if she were far wiser than I and pitied my ignorance," he muttered.

That night the Hawk ran in to the island and unloaded. Leon knew that the vessel was there, although he was locked up, for he could hear the bustle produced by carrying the contraband goods into the storehouse. Would Roswell visit him? This self-asked question was answered just before daybreak, when the stern-faced man entered Leon's prison.

"I see you are awake," he said, as Leon arose from his couch. "It is well. You will get ready to accompany me to Canada."

"For what purpose?"

"Revenge!"

"Revenge for what?" said Leon, presently. "It is my right to know, and I demand of you the explanation of all this mystery."

"Three days hence you shall know all," he moodily answered.

"I demand the knowledge now, before I take a single step in your company," said Leon, firmly.

"Hark ye, my lad—you've got to go, knowledge or no knowledge! So you may as well yield gracefully."

There was no gainsaying that he was completely in this man's power. But he did not want to go. If he could only stay here on the island for a day or two! Perhaps in even less time his notes that were sent adrift would bring rescue for him. Leon was compelled to yield, however, and just ere daybreak the Hawk sailed out of the little bay, and he was on board of her in a character 'twixt that of passenger and prisoner.

It is needless to relate the occurrences of the trip up the lake, or the long land journey that followed, in which Roswell, Jack Bolen and Leon were the only participants. And then Leon learned the meaning of the trouble taken to capture him, of the cause of this long journey. In the streets of a Canadian town, Roswell drew Leon's attention to a man who was passing.

"Note him well," and Roswell's tones quivered with passion. "You would know him again?"

"Yes."

"You must slay that man!"

Leon recoiled, gasping for breath. Slay that man? Commit murder? He, Leon Leroy, reddened his hands with the life-blood of a human being?

"You must slay him, or I will slay you as a craven unworthy of the blood in your veins, unworthy of the family from which you spring!"

CHAPTER XIV.—A Family History.

The man toward whom Captain Roswell had directed Leon's attention finally disappeared, was gone a few minutes, and then reappeared, going in an opposite direction to that when first seen. When they reached a hotel, Roswell called Leon and took him to a private room.

"I will now clear up the mystery of your life," he said, after locking the door to make them secure against intrusion.

"Twenty-two years ago Leon Magruder married Lucy Leroy, sister to the man I pointed out to you. The Magruder's were an old Scotch family, allied by blood to the last of the royal Scottish family. The Leroy's were English, and stood high in office here in this British colony, or province. Leon Magruder was a poor man, the Leroy's were rich. Leon Magruder saw Lucy Leroy, fell in love with her, and they became engaged to be married. Her father opposed the marriage of his daughter to a poor Magruder, but not more strongly than I opposed the marriage of a blue-blooded Magruder to one in whose veins ran the most plebeian of red blood. In spite of opposition on all sides, Leon and Lucy were married, and in course of time two children were born to them. Lucy's father died, leaving his children wealthy, and her brother was advanced from post to post, until he was practically a despot here. In the old countries the English and Scotch were having trouble, and Leroy saw fit to vent his animosity on the peaceable Scotch residents here. The latter were brave and hardy men, and would not quietly submit to imposition, particularly when it was practiced in such an open manner, accompanied by sneers and actual cruelties. Soon the discontent became general. From being discontented they became incensed at being so deeply wronged. Leon Magruder, being so nearly related to Gaspard Leroy, was nominated to visit the dictator, and remonstrate with him. Leon accepted the commission—the fatal commission! He saw his brother-in-law, and upbraided him for his conduct. The two men had never liked each other, and a hot and stormy interview was brought to a close by Leon's rushing out of doors, exclaiming: 'You have been warned! Do not blame me if, having sown the wind, you reap the whirlwind!' The Scotch were loyal. God in Heaven knows that. They did not wish to resist the authority of the crown, even though vested in such as Gaspard Leroy. But what could they do? Indignity followed indignity in quick succession, and at last—there is no need of telling how it came about—the brave Scots struck to preserve their liberty. A cry of treason was raised the next day after that blow had fallen. Heaven knows that no thought of treason had entered the heart of a single one of the Scots. They had been abused, trampled upon, spat upon, and had resented it in the only way open to them—by force of arms—for the courts of justice were closed against them. Leon Magruder was arrested. It was claimed that he had been the leader of the mob; that he had fired their passions, nursed their natural enmity to the English crown, that he had been the ringleader. But he was not, and knew nothing of it—I swear it

before high Heaven. I know this to be true. But he was arrested, tried on the charge of treason, and was sentenced to be hung by his brother-in-law. In vain his wife pleaded for his life. She had no sympathy with us, was English in every feeling, but she loved her husband and could not let him die without trying to save him. For his wife's sake Leon had refused to have anything to do with the movement which he guessed—but did not know—was afoot among his countrymen. I know that I once asked him to join us, but he replied: 'No, that I cannot do, for my wife is English; and my children—my darlings—I must think for them!' When he knew that no mercy would be shown him, that he was to be hung like a dog, even though he was innocent, the Magruder blood within his veins was aroused and heated to a boiling point, and he swore to be avenged—if not by his own hands by those of another. His wife heard that he had spoken of the children in a certain manner, and became frightened. She suddenly disappeared, and returned only on the morning of the day appointed for the execution. I had held secret meetings with my countrymen, and we had arranged a plan of rescue. But they adopted precautions that baffled us completely, and we gave it up, knowing that our game could not succeed. Had there been a ghost of a show we should not have hesitated in making an attack. Surrounded by a guard too strong to be resisted, Leon Magruder was led out to die, to be hung publicly, as a spectacle—they said as a warning to those who were traitors at heart. Well, I was in the crowd, and with breaking heart saw him advance beneath the cross-beam. His step was firm, he showed no fear, and was prepared to die like a man—like a Magruder. His features were set and resolute, and his eyes flashed—not with rage, but with calm and contemptuous hatred, when they rested on the man who had set up for his judge, but was in reality his assassin. His eyes wandered over the crowd that had gathered to see him die. I held up my hand to attract his attention. He saw me and smiled. One moment he seemed to hesitate, and then in the Scotch tongue he uttered the motto of the Magruder's: 'Victory or death for a Magruder!' The eyes of the few Scots flashed, but they remained silent. Then he called me by a pet name, known only to us, and, in the Scotch tongue, cried: 'Into your hands I commit the cause of vengeance! This man has murdered me; let him be as cruelly torn from life as I will soon be. And let it be the hand of my son who lays him low. To your care I commit my Leon. Bring him up to hate the English, tell him the story of my wrongs until he knows them by heart; until he burns to avenge me, until his Magruder blood is molten lava in his veins. Tell the—let the blow fall.' I swore to carry out his scheme of revenge. You are that Leon—the son of whom he spoke. I sought you, but found that your mother had secreted you somewhere. I forced my way into her presence some days later, determined to wrest from her the secret of your hiding-place, and found her on her deathbed. I saw the black cap drawn over your father's eyes, saw the rope choke him to death, saw him writhe and struggle until life was extinct; and I saw your mother, pale, crazed, broken-hearted, when

she drew her last breath. I left that death-chamber with my heart turned into stone, all save one corner, and that was molten iron, boiling, seething, concealing in it my life-purpose—that of finding you, and educating you to become the avenger of your father. I searched far and wide for you, but of you could never find a trace. I tracked her to her hiding-place and found your sister May, and stole her away. You were seen, when on the island, by an old negro, for many years a servitor in your father's family. He recognized you from your looks, and you know the attempts made to capture you. You also know now the history of your life, and why I have brought you to Canada. And knowing this, can you refuse to carry out your father's dying wishes? Can you refuse to avenge him by slaying his murderer?"

Leon thought a minute and then said: "I will avenge my father!"

"Thank heaven for that!" said Roswell.

But a more powerful avenger than Leon now stepped into the breach. Only that day as Gaspar was crossing a street he was knocked down by a runaway horse and killed.

When he had learned all Roswell said:

"Death has robbed us of our revenge. Let us return to the vessel."

CHAPTER XV.—And Last.

Three days later the Hawk ran in, and was fastened to the rude dock in the little bay. May had come down to meet her, and when Leon jumped ashore, he did not hesitate, but took the fair girl in his arms and kissed her fondly.

"You know then——"

"That you are my sister? Yes," and then Leon laughed lightly.

"I thought you knew it the other day, or I would not have returned to kiss you," she said. "What a bold, forward thing you must have thought me."

Leon flushed and felt sheepish. He was very glad that she could not read his thoughts, and know all of his reflections concerning her. Arm in arm, happy at finding in a hitherto lonely world a near relation, they strolled away. And when May asked why Roswell had carried him to Canada, Leon told her the whole story, as related by Roswell, describing what had followed, including his extrication from a terrible dilemma by the death of their mother's brother. May had a fragmentary and disconnected knowledge of a portion of this history, but had she known that Roswell's purpose was to make Leon commit murder, she would have released him when confined on the island, no matter what the cost might have been to herself. While conversing earnestly, and comparing their memories of their sainted mother, they were startled by loud cries of alarm, and a great commotion. They paused, and turned their faces toward where the Hawk lay. For a minute a terrible hush followed, broken then by a hoarse shout of dismay. Then they saw a long train of sparks floating in the air, just beyond the position of the Hawk.

"That comes from the smokestack of a steamer!" cried Leon. "Of a steamer that burns wood! Can my note have reached them—can it be the Sprite?"

Now the shouting grew more general, grew louder, more confused, and the steamer drew nearer to the schooner. And then—— Crack! Crack! Crack!

"It is the revenue officers!" exclaimed May, clasping her hands. "Oh, uncle—uncle—Leon, our uncle will be in the front of the fight, and he will surely be killed."

Crack! Crack! Leaving May there at a safe distance, sheltered behind a rock so that no stray bullet might reach her, Leon bounded toward the shore. As he flew along he heard the hoarse orders of Roswell for his men to stand firm—heard the death cries of the falling smugglers—heard the terrible and meaning crack of numerous revolvers and rifles. It was terrible. He reached the shore only after the fray was ended. May's fears had proved truthful; Roswell had been in the front during the fight, had received a bullet in his body and fallen. Immediately on their leader's fall the others had surrendered. Roswell—for so we have always called him heretofore—was still breathing when Leon reached his side. The dying man recognized his nephew, and a smile crossed his face.

"Good-by," he faintly said, extending his hand, which Leon caught and held. "Good-by. I am glad that before I died we met, knew each other, and that I found you a true Magruder."

Leon continued to hold his hand, but it was the hand of a corpse, for, with those quoted words, the smuggler captain breathed his last. It was, indeed, the Sprite which had surprised the smugglers. After reading Leon's note, Mr. Starr had called on George for his advice. As soon as arrangements could be made, and a force of revenue officers got together, they had sailed for Fox Isles to liberate Leon. The result we are already acquainted with. It could not but be wearisome to the reader to detail minutely all the events which followed, as a matter of course. The survivors of the smuggler band were taken to Milwaukee, and having been tried, were punished in accordance with the law relating to their offenses. That day had been one of surprises on all sides; but perhaps one of the most agreeably surprised was George Starr, on finding that May was Leon's sister, he would have kept concealed the impression May made on his heart, for fear that he would be, as the saying goes, "treading on Leon's toes." But, being Leon's sister, George felt that the field was clear, and if her heart was not yet possessed by another, he should do his best to win a place in it. And George was successful. That simple sentence tells the story as well as a whole chapter. It was not a century later, that on a lovely afternoon, George and May, the beautiful unknown, stood up before the altar and were made man and wife. And thus was the friendship between Leon and George more closely cemented. It is years ago since the occurrence of the incidents of this story. In Milwaukee still live all the principal characters in our story, all of whom, were you to meet them, would gladly vouch for the incidents of the tale of The Boy Pilot.

Next week's issue will contain "THAT BOY OF BARTON'S; or THE LUCK OF A LAD IN WALL STREET."

CURRENT NEWS

SHIP HIDES DIRECTION OF COURSE BY CAMOUAGE

Striking examples of marine inventions performed during the last days of the war are demonstrated on the steamer Bembridge which is in port at Sydney, N. S. W.

Her foremast is placed several feet starboard of the keel to mislead submarines, and her funnel, much shorter than that of the average steamer of her tonnage, is over the keel, so that it is impossible to tell by looking through the periscope of a submarine which way the steamer is proceeding.

Smoke may be diverted from the funnel to a passageway near the waterline, so that the vessel may make an effective screen in emergencies.

LARGE GRAY WHALE SPORTS IN THE SURF

The spectacle of a large gray whale coming inshore to scratch itself was observed at Moclips, Wash., one afternoon recently. The whale came in through the surf where the depth of water was barely sufficient to float it, and lay for twenty to thirty minutes in the breakers, rolling and playing as seals often do, pushing itself with half-extended fins, and then making a playful spring with bended flukes, the immense body striking the

surface with a tremendous smack, audible for a mile or so.

It is believed the whale came into the sandy beach to rub away clusters of barnacles and other crustaceans hanging on its breast and dorsal flippers, or to scratch off "cooties," said to infest them.

Bathers later ascertained that the extreme depth of water in which the whale played was less than eleven feet, and they saw the depression the animal scooped in the ocean's sandy floor.

SMALLEST RAILROAD IN THE WORLD

During the war the Governors Island, Fort Jay, Castle Williams and Filled Ground Railway, with its one engine, two flat cars, a gondola and a box car, and its 29,000 feet of track, was a very busy road. The termination of hostilities killed its usefulness, and now 28,000 feet of its track, 24 warehouses, half a mile of shedding and 5,800 heads of automatic sprinkler system are offered for sale, while the lone sergeant who ran the road has gone back to soldiering. What little is left of it after the sale will be scarcely longer than its name, and its title to the claim of being the smallest railroad in the world will be even more unassailable than before.

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— OR —

HOW DAN SAVED HIS GOOD NAME

By WILLIAM WADE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XV.—(Continued.)

"Then I don't understand how our man can get away," said Dan "with a description of him in the hands of the police, and with orders to detain him, it seems to me that he will have but small chance."

The three had just arisen from their seats, and Dick had paid and liberally tipped the waiter, and all three had just put on their hats preparatory to leaving the restaurant, when the door of the eating house that was nearest to them had opened about half way, and the face of a man for one second appeared in the opening.

This it was that had checked the words on Dan's lips, for he caught a fleeting glimpse of a familiar face with a black mustache waxed and twisted in dandified fashion, and had then met the man's eye. He had the merest glimpse of the fellow before the face was withdrawn and the door was closed, but the expression of alarm that he surprised on the man's face assured him that he was looking at Stephen Carrington.

"There he goes!" he cried, and rushed towards the door through which the man had disappeared.

"Carrington?" cried Dick.

"Sam Cash?" shouted Prendergast.

"Yes," yelled back Dan, and made for the door with all speed.

After him sped Prendergast and Dick Dale.

Through the doorway rushed Dan, and out into the street.

The electric lights were blazing now, and all three caught sight of a man just getting into a hansom cab a hundred feet away from the restaurant, and they all yelled at once:

"Hold on, cabman!"

"Stop him!"

"After him!"

And they all rushed forward.

The man leaped into the cab, the driver, who evidently had his instructions, whipped up his horse, and the hansom sped away, and the three pursuers caught sight of a grinning face pressed against the glass of the window, while one hand caressed the heavy mustache as though in derision.

Prendergast stopped short, looked around him, saw another cab at the curb, ran for it with the boys at his heels, and spoke to the driver, who was sitting on his box:

"See that hansom going up the street?"

"Yes, sir."

"Don't lose sight of it. Double fare anyhow, and if you can bring us alongside or ahead of it we'll give you a tip for your trouble."

"I'll do my best, sir."

"In with you," cried Prendergast, and the boys leaped nimbly into the cab. The man whipped up his horse, and went ahead as fast as the traffic in the street permitted, and kept one eye constantly on the vehicle which he had been told to follow, and to overtake or pass if he could possibly accomplish either of the latter's desires.

"What do you make of this?" cried Dick to Prendergast. "You thought in the most positive manner that your man would fear to remain in London, and would make all haste to get out of the country."

"I certainly did," admitted Prendergast, looking out through the front window at the vehicle ahead, "and I must say that this move surprises me."

"Are you gaining on him?" asked Dan.

"No, neither gaining nor losing, but I must say that the driver ahead is a most skillful chap, and cuts through small openings in the most clever way, and if I did not know Slippery Sam wanted to get away from us as fast of possible I should imagine that his driver lets us get just so near and then lets out a link, so to speak, and leaves us just as far behind as ever. We can only get just so close, and no closer."

In and out among the vehicles and the pedestrians the two cabs made their way, until fully a half hour had passed, and then the one in front was blocked by a passing dray, and Prendergast's driver whipped up his horse and ran right up alongside the stalled vehicle and drew rein.

"Now!" cried Prendergast, and with the two boys close behind him he leaped from his own cab, rushed to the other, and threw open the door.

The occupant of the cab cowered as far back as he could in the corner, but Prendergast thrust in one hand, caught the fellow by the collar of his coat, and hauled him forward with a powerful tug.

"What's this?" he yelled. "Highway robbery?"

And as he uttered the words he struck at Prendergast and knocked him backward with such force that had not Dick been close behind him the man from Rederton's would have gone down to the ground.

The cabs had been halted in a side street, but still there were a number of pedestrians there who at once halted, and cries at once went up:

"What's the bloomin' row?"

"The bloke says its robbery."

"No, its only a haltercation."

And several persons at once crowded around the spot where the principal actors in this little drama of the street stood staring at one another, for when the man who had been hauled from the cab stood fully revealed in the strong rays of a nearby electric light it was seen that the heavy mustache that had adorned his upper lip was hanging from one corner of his month, and Prendergast and the boys could see that although he resembled Stephen Carrington in a general way that he was not the hat spinner.

"What does this outrage mean?" roared the man who had been hauled from the cab.

The boys were speechless, but Prendergast took a long look at the man, and then said quietly:

"It's George."

(To be continued.)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

SQUIRRELS AND GUNSTOCKS

Black walnut is a fine ornamental tree of fairly rapid growth. The Forest Service points out that the merry squirrel was really the agent that supplied our army with gunstocks; his habit of burying the nuts in open areas, where the saplings sprouting from them can secure the necessary sun, was "a big deposit to man's account in Nature's savings bank." There are about 821,000,000 feet of black walnut in the country, 50 per cent. of it available for commerce. It requires good agricultural soil, and if the supply is to be adequate there must be careful management of existing groves and the immediate establishment of new ones.

SALVAGES OLD NEWSPAPERS

A process to remove ink from old newspapers so the paper can be used again for printing purposes has been developed by the United States Forest Products Laboratory, Madison, Wis., according to an announcement recently. One mill under commercial conditions has deinked 1,500 tons of old newspapers and has remade the paper into newsprint stock of desired strength and color, which was accepted by publishers as standard, it is said.

Bentonite, a claylike substance formed from volcanic ash and found largely in Wyoming, is used in the deinking process. It dissolves the ink and leaves the paper perfectly clear, the announcement says.

Because of the cheapness of the new process laboratory officials say they believe that much of the 2,200,000 tons of newsprint annually used can now be salvaged.

CANADA'S COAL SUPPLY

Canada has six great coal fields; bituminous coal in Nova Scotia; in the Crow's Nest Pass region; in Northern Alberta; and on Vancouver Island; lignite in Saskatchewan and Manitoba; and anthracite in Northern British Columbia. Only the bituminous mines are being worked to any great extent. The lignite is a lower grade of coal which requires further processing to make it a satisfactory fuel and the anthracite is at present beyond the reach of transportation. Canada uses large quantities of anthracite coal, which she gets from the United States. The Canadian anthracite fields lie on the upper Skeena River, about 150 miles north of Hazelton, and a comparatively short line of railway to tide water at the mouth of the Naas or Skeena, or to Hazelton on the Grand Trunk Pacific, would, it is asserted, open up an immensely wealthy region comparable to the anthracite regions of Pennsylvania. The Skeena coal is hard, smokeless fuel and is said to be very similar to the Pennsylvania product. It is a fine steam coal and is excellent for domestic uses.

WILD SHRUB THAT PRODUCES COCAINE

A traveller in Bolivia and Peru will come across a shrub growing wild which will remind him somewhat of the British blackthorn. It

bears a cluster of small flowers with yellowish-white petals which are succeeded by red berries. The leaves are oval and about an inch in length, and when crushed have a faint tealike odor.

This is the coca plant.

The leaves have for centuries been used by the natives as a masticatory. When chewed they allay the desire for food and prevent a feeling of fatigue when travelling or during great exertion.

Fifty years ago cocaine was practically unknown, says Pharmacist in the London Daily Mail. The dried leaves of the plant are the part used and these yield approximately 5 per cent. of cocaine.

From the leaves the cocaine is extracted in the form of crystals. But as these are soluble only in oils, alcohol, chloroform and some other vehicles, the cocaine is converted into a hydrochloric, which is easily soluble in water. In this form it may be used as a powder for sprinkling on the parts to be operated on or for sniffing into the nose, or as a solution for injection under the skin.

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THE BANK WATCHMAN'S STORY

By KIT CLYDE

"How long have I been a bank watchman?" repeated Daniel McShane, as he took the pipe from his mouth and slowly blew the smoke away. "Well, sir, I've put in over thirty years at it."

"But you are not more than forty now."

"Forty-one, sir; and I began the business when I was ten years old."

"That was a tender age, and there must be a story connected with your debut."

"Right you are, sir, and if you have half an hour to spare we'll have a pot of beer together, and I'll tell you the yarn. When I was a kid of eight my father was made night watchman of the old Traders' Bank of Philadelphia. Everything was very primitive then, as you may remember. There were bad men about, but there was no need of burglar-proof safes and time locks to circumvent them. Banks were then run about the same as stores. The Traders' opened at eight in the morning and closed at five in the afternoon, and the last official did not leave until seven, at which time my father went on duty. He was on from that hour until seven in the morning, but was not supposed to be awake all the time. He had a cot bed in the office, and many a night he slept all night without once opening his eyes, although he was supposed to sleep so lightly that every noise would arouse him. He was provided with a club and a shotgun, and there was no fear of his honesty or courage."

"Things went on very quietly for a couple of years, and I was then employed as a sort of messenger boy by a restaurant man who kept his place open all night. If a drunken man came in, which was a nightly occurrence, or a loafer sought to jump his bill, which was often the case, I made a run of two blocks to the police station for an officer. In this way, and by acting as a waiter at one of the tables, I earned a small weekly salary, and in the bargain it was agreed that I should carry my father a lunch every night at midnight. This consisted of a pail of hot coffee, a sandwich, and a piece of pie. I was always off at the stroke of twelve, took a walk of two squares, and father was generally at the door waiting for me."

"You will readily see, sir, that the circumstances furnished a sharp man the occasion to do a big stroke of work, but it was two years before they were taken advantage of. Then a couple of crooks, one of whom was from England, set up the racket. For several nights I was followed from the restaurant to the bank and back. It was known why I made the trip, how father received me, and how long I remained inside. My time in the bank was about a quarter of an hour, and then father let me out, and sometimes stood at the door and watched me down to the corner. Well, as it turned out, the crooks put it up to get into the bank as I came out, or just after I had gone. They had timed the officer on that beat, and at half-past twelve he was invariably at the

other end of his beat, five squares away. The police business at that time was run in a haphazard way, and an officer could sit and sleep in a doorway or patrol his beat, as he was inclined. It was a pretty good man on that beat, but he was a slow walker and fond of his pipe. As his smoking was mostly done at the other end of his beat, he was certain to take his time about coming back."

"Did I have any suspicions? I did, sir. Begging your pardon for what seems like boasting, but I was accounted a very sharp boy at that age, and I think I realized father's responsibilities more than he did himself. I was always giving him a word of caution, and the very first time I was followed I suspected that some evil was intended, and I warned him not to open the door until I knocked. The next night the two men were close at my heels, and I would not knock until they had left me. Father agreed with me that it was best to be cautious, and next day the old gun was discharged and loaded anew. I was followed on the third, fourth and fifth nights, and it was on this latter night that the climax came. As I left the restaurant I was joined by one of the men, who claimed to be a vessel owner, and who asked me how I would like to go to sea. He gave me a lot of taffy about my being the smartest boy he ever saw, and wishing to do something for me, and as we arrived at the bank door he halted with me, and said he would step in and see father. At the same time I saw the policeman smoking his pipe in the next door."

"Now, sir, I hope you won't lay it up against me for saving that I tumbled to the racket at once, for that is the truth. While I swallowed none of the taffy given me, I no sooner saw the policeman at that point with his pipe alight than I twiggged him for a pal in disguise. I had been observing things for two years, mind you, and such an innovation was not to be passed over. I explained to the man that it would be against the rules to admit him, and that he must see father next day, and after discussing the matter for a while he walked off. Then I gave four knocks on the door, and father finally came around to praise my caution. I left at about the usual time, and was glad to find the street deserted. I returned to the restaurant at a fast walk, but no sooner had I reached it than I wheeled about for the bank. It struck me all at once that the policeman had caught on to my four knocks, and that after I had gone the pair might seek to get father to the door by giving them. I dropped the dishes and started off on a run, and in three or four minutes was at the bank. The door was slightly open, and I jumped right against it and flung it back. A light was always left burning, and at a glance I saw that father was down and both men on top of him. They had his head covered with a cloth, and though he was calling out, his cries could not have been heard ten feet."

"The cot was at the left as you entered the bank, and the gun stood at the foot of it. Just the minute I was inside I realized what was going on, and the first move I made was for the gun. As I seized it and wheeled about one of the villains, who had been sitting on father's legs, reached out a foot and kicked the door shut, and

the other gave father two blows with a short iron bar, and then sprang up and faced me. Father straightened out, seeming to have been killed by the blows, and the sight gave me courage and determination. When both of the men were on their feet, the one in uniform commanded me to give up the gun. I held it in a way to cover both, hammer up and finger on the trigger, and I did not mean to give it up. For half a minute after the man spoke there was dead silence. The light hung from the ceiling between me and them, and although it was turned down, I could see the slightest move made by either. The false policeman picked up a stool, raised it above his head in a deliberate way, and said:

"Boy, put down that gun, or I'll brain you!"

"Hold on, Dick, let me shoot him," whispered the other, and he drew from his pocket one of the first revolvers I had ever seen.

"He had it pointed at me, when Dick stopped him by saying the report would arouse someone. Coward that he was, he dared not advance upon me, but suddenly flung the stool at my head. It struck the lamp with a crash, and in a second we were in darkness. The glass had not ceased rattling when I blazed away with the gun. It was loaded with swan shot, and I had put in a whole handful. There were three or four screams of rage and pain, and one went to the floor with a heavy crash, while the other staggered to the door, opened it, and staggered out. I was after him in a jiffy. It was moonlight outside, and I saw him in the middle of the street. I ran for him, shouting for the police, and as he turned and saw me I called to him to halt or I would give him the other barrel. Well, sir, I held him right there until an officer came to take him away, but I must tell you that he had three or four of the shot in his face and was badly dazed. When we entered the bank we found father sitting up and rubbing his head, and across his feet was the dead body of the other crook. Nearly the whole charge of shot had struck him in the breast, and he was dead inside of a minute.

"I've got the newspaper account pasted into a scrapbook. They made me out a hero, and they praised me much more than I deserved. I told the story just as it was to the bank people, and the result was that I was put in to watch with father, and we were there together for the next ten years. The wounded crook got a sentence to prison, and before he went he owned up like a man to all I have told you. They got father to open the door by giving four knocks, and they had him down before he knew what was up. If left undisturbed, they would have made a big haul, as the bank money was easy to get at. Since a week after that night I have been a bank watchman, and, though I have had no other chance to play the hero, the fact that I am kept in my place is evidence of faithfulness."

CATCH FISH WITH BIRDS

This curious method of catching fish with birds instead of hook and line has existed in Japan from time immemorial. Twenty-eight men four

boats and sixty-four birds constitute a working unit of these picturesque fishing fleets to be seen in any sections of Japan, but particularly along the Niagara River.

The cormorants are trained when quite young and will continue to work fifteen and even twenty years. When well trained and properly handled each bird will average about 150 fish an hour.

The master fisherman, distinguished by his peculiar hat, stands in the bow handling no fewer than twelve birds with remarkable skill. Another fisherman, with four birds, is situated amidships, a third member of the crew is stationed between the two, armed with a piece of bamboo, which he strikes to keep the birds at their work, at the same time encouraging them by shouts and cries.

Each cormorant has a ring of metal or bone around the base of its neck, permitting it to swallow fish as food, but effectively stopping those of marketable size from passing through.

Round the body of the bird is a cord, to which is attached in the middle of the back a short strip of stiff whalebone, with which to lower the bird into the water or lift it out again, and a thin rein of spruce fiber, 12 feet long.

The master lowers his twelve birds into the stream and holds the reins in his left hand, manipulating them with his right as occasion requires. The second fisherman does the same with his four birds, while the third man begins his volley of noise.

The birds start diving and ducking with wonderful swiftness as the fish come swimming toward the blaze of light. The master has a busy time handling his twelve strings to prevent them tangling while the birds are dashing hither and thither.

When one of the birds becomes engorged it swims about in a foolish, helpless way, with its head and swollen neck erect, and the master hauls it in. He forces its bill open with his hand, still holding the other lines, and squeezes out the fish with his right, after which he returns the bird to its work. This is all done with such admirable dexterity and quickness that the other birds have not had time to become entangled, and immediately the whole team is again perfectly in hand.

Each bird has its own number and knows it. No. 1, or "Lchi," is the doyen of the corps, the senior in years as well as rank, and his companions, according to their age, come after him in numerical order. Ichi is the last to be put into the water and the first to be taken out, the first to be fed and the last to enter the baskets when the work is over. Ichi has the post of honor in the eves of the boat. He is a solemn, grizzled old fellow, with a pompous air. The others are placed alternately on either side of the gunwale, according to their rank, and, should the lawful order of precedence at any time be violated, a terrific rumpus occurs among them.

After the fishing is over, as each cormorant is taken out of the water, the master can tell by its weight whether it has had enough to eat during the hunt, and, if not, the bird is fed with the inferior fish that have been caught.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, JULY 19, 1922

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INTERESTING ARTICLES

HOW FAR FLIES TRAVEL

Experiments conducted by the Bureau of Entomology demonstrate that the house fly frequently journeys five or six miles in 24 hours, which emphasizes the sanitary importance of destroying breeding places. Some 234,000 flies of various species were dusted with finely-powdered red chalk and released. Baited fly traps were placed at measured intervals in all directions; thus the flights of different species were determined. The maximum distance traveled by the house fly was 13.14 miles.

A PIGEON'S LONG FLIGHT

An exhausted pigeon picked up at Columbus Circle, New York City, was found to bear a message from Edmund Heller, the well-known naturalist, now making a survey of the animals of Yellowstone Park. The message, upon being read, declared that the writer was lost on the Hoodoo Mountains, and asked that help be sent. It was addressed to his fellow-naturalist, Dan Singer, who identified the pigeon as one of a flock they had trained together, and promptly wired orders for a rescue party. As it is 1,900 miles from Yellowstone Park to New York, and the bird apparently made this in five days, it had to average 380 miles a day.

HORNED TOADS DRINK LESS THAN CAMELS

The horned toad rather than the camel should be the Prohibitionists' emblem, says the *Popular Science Monthly*. That this animal can live for 119 days not only without water but in an absolutely dry atmosphere has been demonstrated by Prof. F. G. Hall of the University of Wisconsin.

The scaly, impervious skin of the toad prevents evaporation from its body, it is found, while its organs are adapted to excrete insoluble crystals of uric acid instead of a fluid. Any water absorbed when the toad does take a drink remains in the body, keeping the blood fluid almost indefinitely. How well the animal is protected is shown by the fact that after four months in an atmosphere made absolutely dry by inclosing a

pan of concentrated sulphuric acid in the container, the toad lost only 35 per cent. of its weight. Under the same conditions an angleworm lost 65 per cent. in four hours, and warm-blooded animals would have lost weight nearly as fast.

Unlike the toad experimented upon by Prof. Hall, the camel does not really go without a drink but simply converts stored up fat into moisture. An Arab picks out a camel with a fat, well-developed hump for travel in the desert. The camel will not drink on the journey, but at the end of the trip the hump is thin and shrunken. As the camel's tissues start to dry, the oxygen dissolved in the blood attacks the fat and changes it into water. Since part of this "metabolic water" comes from the air, a pound of fat makes several pounds of fluid.

LAUGHS

"What is it wound up on that cart?" asked the old lady visiting the fire house. "Fireman's hose," was the answer. "Excuse me," she said indignantly, "you can't tell me that any fireman or any one else ever had legs to fit those things."

One day Ernest had been seriously lectured by his mother, and finally sent to the yard to find a switch with which he was to be punished. He returned soon, and said: "I couldn't find any switch, mamma, but here's a stone you can throw at me."

"What became of that little kitten you had?" inquired the visitor of the small boy of the house. "Why, haven't you heard?" "No; was it drowned?" "No." "Lost?" "No." "Did you give it away?" "No." "Then whatever did become of it?" "It grew up into a cat."

A school teacher sought to reprove a boy who had failed to solve an example. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself," said the teacher. "When George Washington was your age he was a surveyor." "Well," came the quick response, "when he was your age he was President of the United States."

The Visitor—You have a very fine view here, my friend. The Guide—Ay can sometimes see a long way. The Visitor—(facetiously)—Ah, I suppose you can see America when it's clear? The Guide—Farther than that. The Visitor—Ah, is that so? The Guide—Yes; if you wait a while, you'll see the moon.

"You are charged with selling adulterated milk," said the judge. "So I understand, your honor," said the milkman. "I plead not guilty." "But the testimony shows that your milk is 25 per cent. water," said the judge. "Then it must be high-grade milk," returned the milkman. "If your honor will look up the word milk in your dictionary you will find that it consists of from 80 to 90 per cent. water. I'd ought to have sold it for cream."

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FROM ALL POINTS

LARGE STRAWBERRIES

Ernest M. Hurley of Wetipquin, this county, brought to Salisbury, Md., the other day some of the largest strawberries ever seen here. The berry, originated and named by Mr. Hurley, is called the "Blue Cross." Some of those brought here measured six inches in circumference and, unlike many of the new varieties, the berry is solid.

CRABS THAT STEAL EGGS

Crabs are not usually looked upon in the light of a nuisance, but there are some species which cause bother and alarm.

Oddly enough, the fisherman of Japan has a supreme contempt for the gigantic crab of his coast, which has nippers ten feet in length, and when moving along the bottom of the sea with its claws spread out covers an area of twenty-two feet or so.

The destructiveness of certain species of crab in the West Indies is remarkable. On Grand Cayman they are as heartily detested as the rat. They are great burrowers, and in localities where they are plentiful—and they multiply with the rapidity of the rodent—nothing is safe from them. They will eat even the eggs on which a hen is setting as greedily as the hen herself if she does not run away, and just as rapidly the leaves of seedling cocoanut trees. They effect in the West Indies practically the same great degree of destruction on the young cocoanuts as the sepoys do in the East Indies. In each instance some 8 to 11 per cent. of the seedlings have to be replaced if they are planted in newly cleared ground from which the crabs have not been thoroughly cleared out.

These land crabs destroy vegetation and are responsible for frequent patches of bare soil in the bush, which, when the crabs are gone, soon become covered again. Into their holes they take things for which they cannot conceivably find any use—a knife, a boot, a book and any tools they find lying about. During the drier months in the earlier part of the year they go underground to change their shells, and add to their destructiveness by thoroughly barricading the mouths of their burrows with all sorts of rubbish, reinforced with tree shoots and young saplings, nipping them off or uprooting them.

No crab, however, has the infamous reputation—fabulous it most likely is—of the sepoys crab of the Indian Ocean and Eastern waters. This crustacean, often seen on the shores of coco islands, and sometimes, although seldom by day, climbing up the coco palm to steal the fruit, is between a crab and a lobster.

The sepoys spends its time stealing cocoanuts, dragging them to the mouth of its burrow among the tree roots, peeling them and eating the almond lining. The sepoys—so called from the blue and white uniform of the soldiers (Sepoys) of the old East Indian Company—about two feet long, are not feared by the natives, who put their

arms into their holes and seizing the claws in a bunch whip them out suddenly.

But they speak with awe of the rare monster crabs that exceed three feet in length, and one of them is said to have once stolen a child. This is told not only in the islands of the Mauritius and of Diego Garcia, but so far apart as Lord Hood's Island in the Pacific, where the sepoys is also found.

ABOUT EARTH EATERS

In several parts of the world the dearth of food compels men to nourish themselves with certain kinds of earth which possess a true nutritive power. Travellers are too unanimous on this point to allow of our doubting it. The fact too was known at a far more distant epoch than is generally supposed, for it is mentioned in the old and curious book of Naude in defence of the great men accused of magic. It is there said that certain earths of the Valley of Hebron are good to eat.

Toward the mouth of the Orinoco the Ottomacs, a native tribe, at certain seasons of the year nourish themselves to a great extent with a fat ferruginous clay, of which they consume as much as a pound and a half a day. Spix and Martius say that a similar custom is found on the banks of the Amazon; and those learned travellers relate that the natives there eat this earth even when there is no lack of more substantial food. We also know that an edible clay is sold in the markets of Bolivia. Gliddon tells us that there are a number of earth eating tribes in North America and there are clay eaters in the Carolinas and Georgia.

Naturalists, struck with these accounts, were anxious to make out the composition of these edible earths and to their astonishment discovered that some of them were species of clays containing a considerable number of fresh water infusoria or microscopic shells; so that we might suppose that these clays owe their properties to animal matter they have retained and that it is this which furnishes man with this truly antediluvian food, composed of the remains of microscopic animals.

But nature has not stopped here; she has now and then produced a perfect animalized meal. There is nothing necessary but to make it into bread. In fact, it is well known that in times of dearth the Laplanders nourish themselves with a white mineral dust, which they substitute for cereal products. Retius, who examined this meal, found that it was composed of nineteen species of infusoria, similar to those now found around Berlin; and the scientist has shown that this skeleton dust, which is also found in Finland and Sweden, owes its nutritive qualities to a certain amount of animal substance which chemical analysis detected after so many ages.

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PLUCK AND LUCK

GOOD READING

BIG RUSH FOR DIAMOND MINES

The biggest rush in the history of South Africa's alluvial diamond diggings occurred at Mosesberg, sixty miles from Kimberley, recently, when about 15,000 diggers from all parts of the Union and Rhodesia pegged out their claims.

The line of start for the peggers extended more than four miles, and immediately after the proclamation was read the diggers, each carrying four pegs, rushed to the points they favored. There were no casualties, which is regarded as remarkable, considering the number of claimants and the excitement engendered by the rush.

THE LARGEST DIAMOND

The famous Cullinan diamond which was discovered in the New Premier mine in the town of Cullinan, in the Transvaal, South Africa, is the largest on record. Its weight was a little over 3,025 carats, or 9,566 grains. It was presented in 1907 to King Edward VII by the Transvaal Government to ornament the crown and scepter of Great Britain. It has now been cut into two of the largest brilliants in the world, weighing respectively 516 and 309 carats, and about 100 smaller brilliants. Cullinan, where it was found, is about 20 miles from Pretoria. The Cullinan was more than three times the size of any other known diamond and was found in yellow ground. It is clear and water white and may be only a portion of a still larger stone. Upon its purchase by the Transvaal Government it was sent to Amsterdam, Holland, to be cut. All the stones are flawless and the finest in existence.

NEURITIS DUE TO TOO TIGHT WRIST WATCH

Be careful not to bind the strap of your wrist watch too tight. Several cases of neuritis in the fingers and hands have been traced to this cause. Dr. John S. Stopford tells in the *Lancet* of a student who experienced tingling pains along the inner borders of the hand and in the little finger. These had persisted for some time and caused discomfort and anxiety. On examination a tender point was discovered on the dorsal surface of the styloid process of the ulna, and pressure in this situation caused pain to radiate from this point into the dorsal cutaneous branch of the ulnar nerve. There was no sign of paresis or atrophy of any of the intrinsic muscles of the hand, nor were any trophic changes found. On investigating a cause for this localized neuritis the only possibility appeared to be the wearing of a tight wristlet watch, which clearly could produce compression of the dorsal cutaneous branch of the ulnar nerve as it curved round the lower extremity of the ulna. On discarding the wristlet the discomfort gradually disappeared.

PHOTOGRAPHER DROPS 24,206 FEET IN PARACHUTE

Capt. A. W. Stevens, aerial photographer, of McCook Field, Dayton, Ohio, established a new

parachute jumping record on June 12 when he descended 24,206 feet to safety.

Another record was broken at the same time when Lieut. Leigh Wade piloted a twin-motored Martin bomber, carrying three passengers, to an altitude of 24,206 feet, it was announced.

Captain Stevens ascended in the same plane with Lieutenant Wade.

The pilot, accompanied by Stevens and Sergt. Roy Langham, observer, took off at 11 a. m. and reached the maximum altitude at 1 p. m., requiring two hours and five minutes to make the climb.

Reaching the maximum height, the party partook of refreshments and Stevens made ready for his leap.

When he left the plane he did not permit his chute to be opened by the wind and then lift him off, but leaped over the side and dropped several thousand feet before it opened and checked his drop.

The oxygen tank which he had sewn to his flying suit was torn off in the leap and lost.

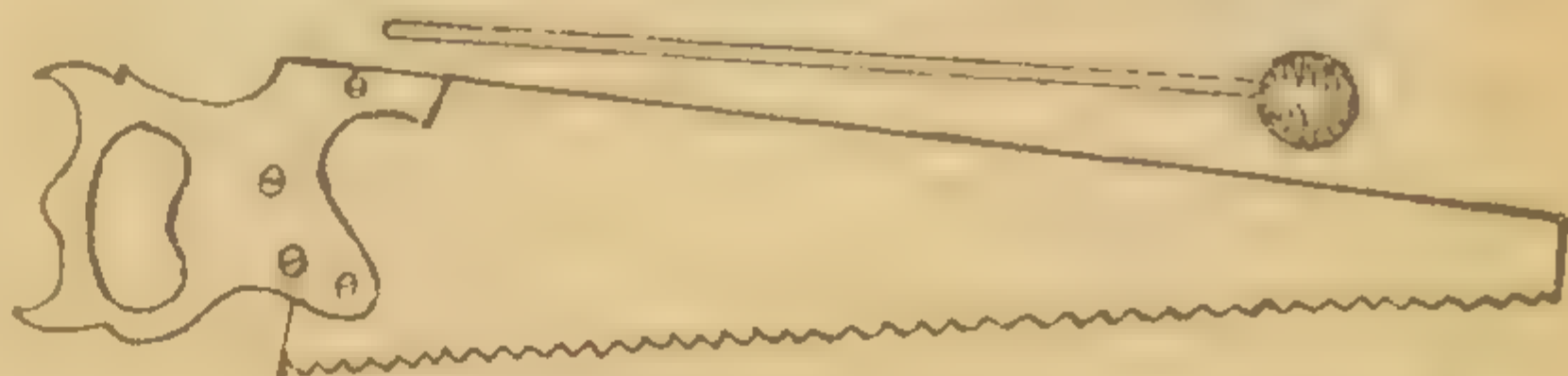
Thirty minutes were required for the descent. He left the plane while over Springfield and landed at Jamestown, a small village twenty-five miles southwest of Dayton.

Flying conditions were ideal. The temperature on the ground was 75 degrees and zero was reached at the maximum altitude. So strong was the wind at 24,206 feet that the motors, which were traveling at about 100 miles an hour, only served to keep the ship upright and the wind forced it backward at a speed of about twenty miles an hour, Wade said upon descent.

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4th Prize	20	35	65	175
5th Prize	10	25	40	100
6th to 15th Prizes—each	1	2	5	10

Read These Rules:

1. Any person living in America (outside of Chicago, Ill.), except employees of Home Folks Magazine or their relatives, may submit an answer. There is no entrance fee.

2. The answer having the largest number of words which correctly name objects beginning with the letter "H" will win first prize, and so on down the list of 15 prizes. The winning list will be made up from the words submitted by the contestants, and not controlled by any predetermined list of words selected by the judges as being the correct or "master" list. In case of ties for any prizes offered, full amount of the prize tied for will be awarded each tying contestant.

3. Use only English words. Words of the same spelling but different meaning, and synonymous words will count only once. Either the singular or plural may be named, but not both. An object may be named only once, but its parts may also be named. Answers must not include hyphenated, compound or obsolete words, or words not applicable to objects shown in the picture. For each word that is incorrect, a percentage

will be deducted from the total number of correct words. Webster's International Dictionary will be final authority.

4. Write your list of words on one side of the paper only. Number words consecutively—1, 2, 3, 4, etc. An enlarged picture will be furnished free on request.

5. Three judges independent of and having no connection with "Home Folks" Magazine will make the decisions and award the prizes. Their decisions must be accepted as final and conclusive. Prize winners will be notified immediately after the judges have made their decision, and names of the winners and winning list of words will be published in "Home Folks" as soon as possible after the close of the contest.

6. Two or more people may co-operate in answering the puzzle. However, only one prize will be given to any household or group.

7. All word lists must be received not later than office closing time, September 20, 1922, but subscriptions to Home Folks Magazine sent to qualify lists for the prizes will be accepted if received up to office closing time Oct. 7th.

The Horse wears a Harness. On the woman in the foreground there is Hat, Head, Hand. That's five words to start on. How many more can you find? Write down the "H" words as you find them. See how easy it is. Nothing is hidden. You can win \$1,500.

Open to Everybody!

It doesn't cost one cent to enter this contest or to win a prize. If you send no subscription to "Home Folks" and your list is the largest which correctly names the "H" objects in the picture, you will be awarded first prize of \$40.

How to Win the \$1500

Remember, you do not need to send in any subscriptions in order to win a cash prize. But if you send in \$1 for one 5-year subscription and the judges decide your list is best, you win \$200 instead of \$40. If you send in \$2 for two 5-year subscriptions, and are awarded first prize, you get \$400. But if you send us \$5 for five 5-year subscriptions, and win first prize, you get \$1500; for the second best list you would get \$750; for third best list \$375, etc., as shown in Class D prize column. Win all you can.

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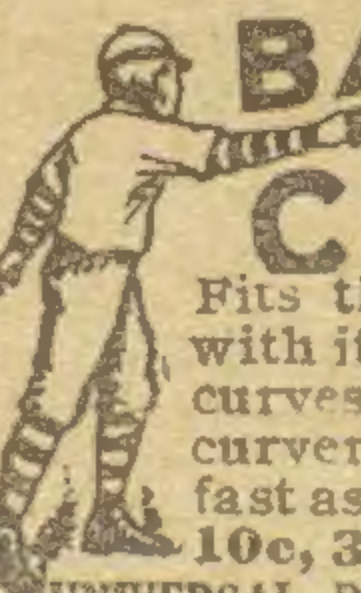
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